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INDO-AFGHAN RELATIONS
1882-1907

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Indo-Afghan Relations 1882-1907

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In the end, I acknowledge my debt to my Professor and supervisor Dr Bisheshwar Prasad, Head of the History Department at that time, for the encouragement, inspiration and guidance which I received from him. I am also grateful to him for writing foreword for this book He placed at my disposal the microfilm copies of Lansdowne, Fowler, Hamilton and Ampthill Papers, without the use of which this work would have been incomplete. I am equally indebted to the staff of the National Archives of India, National Library Calcutta and their staff at Esplanade Reading Room where I consulted the files of old newspapers. In the end I must thank my friends, my publisher, and particularly my wife for rendering all possible assistance in the publication of this book.

Delhi
March, 1973 G P Tripathi

FOREWORD

The most prominent phase of foreign policy in the nineteenth century was the attitude of the then Government of India towards Afghanistan Rival imperialisms of Great Britain, France and Russia had chosen Asia as the field of their operations When the century dawned the British were faced with the grim prospect of Franco-Russian advance through the regions of West Asia directed against their own dominion in India. However, the exit of Napoleon Bonaparte from the French political scene for the time being eliminated the threat of the combination of two Emperors to the empire of the British in South Asia. But the Russian danger did not abate, rather it aggravated as the century advanced. In their initial predicament the British sought co-operation of Iran and Afghanistan to prevent the march of hostile forces through their territories and thereby combat the mounting menace of Russian aggression. Soon Iran's disappointment at the lack of British assistance in the hour of its danger compelled the Shah of that land to woo Russian support and become a subordinate ally to the Czar. The Government of India was left then with the sole alternative of depending on Afghanistan for the security of its territory. The Afghan policy grew out of this need. Strategic compulsions necessitated imposing Afghanistan as a block to counter Russian march towards India. This would be possible only by identifying the defence of Afghanistan with that of India. To achieve this result intimate relations with the ruler of that land were imperative. The British Government and their subordinate the Government of India, throughout this period, were agreed on the importance of keeping the Amir of Afghanistan friendly; and there appeared no difference in the thinking of the various ruling parties in London or the quinquennial Viceroys in Calcutta on this point. The difference arose only on the mode of achieving this result and the degree of Amir's pliability. One

view respected Amir's independence and desired this amiability and co-operation by comforting him with monetary subsidies and pledging support in case of threat to his security, external or internal No interference with his domestic policy was intended and no Resident was to be imposed on him. Of course his external relations were to be influenced for which normally there would be no need as all Amirs seemed to be conscious of danger from their Russian neighbours. The other section, however, had more ambitious designs It had no faith in the integrity of Oriental monarchs and was not prepared to leave them to their own counsels They demanded complete control over the Amir's foreign policy, major participation in the military defence of the country, supervision over his domestic dealings and the residence of British officers in his dominions The Government of India was then familiar with only one principle in its attitude towards Asian rulers and that was the system of subsidiary alliances which had developed in the context of its relations with the Indian Princes. It is the conflict between these two seemingly opposite modes of behaviour towards Amir of Afghanistan which marks the process of Anglo-Afghan relations

Fear from Russia was the guiding motive of Afghan policy of the Government of India There were two views about its character; one presumed military invasion through Afghan territories while the other discounted Russian ability to launch on such an expensive adventure but believed that the Russians would try to score against the British by entrenching their political hold over Kabul. In either case the threat to British security was there and to counteract it the Indo-British Governments sought to have a pliant, friendly ruler in Afghanistan Auckland's solution was to raise a completely submissive Shah Shuja to the throne there and to maintain him even with the help of bayonets. Lytton was prepared to disintegrate Afghanistan and impose subordinate princes on the two thrones with British Residents there to act as mentors, in the interest of providing a scientific frontier to India. Both these excursions into politico-military adventurism miscarried. In the interim between these two wars a policy of non-intervention was adopted, which itself was no solution to the problem. The debate on the siting of military defence of the north-west frontier of

India, whether it should be on the Sind line, just above the river Indus, or on the Hindukush line, excited strong feelings on either but was not resolved till 1907 when between Russia and England their spheres of influence were demarcated, leaving Afghanistan within the British sphere. The second Afghan war failed to subdue the will of the Afghans to remain independent; but as its aftermath emerged the policy of leaving the Amir free in his internal affairs while controlling his external relations, so that he could not have any dealings with Asian or European governments except through the British, and guaranteeing his security against foreign aggression. Delimitation of his northern frontier with Russia was a necessary consequence of the policy of safeguarding his interests Yet Amir Abdur Rahman, a wise ruler, friendly to his guardian power, had no peace from British nagging. Russian expansionism in Central Asia, particularly towards Pamir and eastwards, revived the craze for forward policy Its shape was different in so far as military bases on the Hindukush or Herat were no longer demanded, but Lansdowne and Curzon favoured presence of British officers on Afghan Frontiers, erection of telegraph lines in Afghanistan to connect with India, construction of railway lines through the two passes connecting India with Afghanistan and even pushing them beyond, fortifying the Indian frontier, winning over allegiance of frontier tribes and otherwise positing strong military presentation in the north-western frontier region menacing the security of Amir's possessions. This renewed forward policy might have involved a third confrontation but for the mild tone of British Government which did not wish to embroil itself in a war in the then international situation. The Durand Agreement demarcated Indo-Afghan frontiers, but there could be no peace in the tribal region. Curzon's policy of capitalising on the death of Abdur Rahman and revising the basis of Indo-Afghan relations had precipitated a crisis. Ultimately Anglo-Russian Convention brought settlement between the two empires at the cost of Afghanistan. However, peace was not disturbed but it is difficult to presume that the Amir willingly accepted the position. All these twentyfive years with which this book deals were years of uneasy friendliness but British policy was least calculated to ensure stable amicability.

Dr. Tripathi has graphically narrated the exciting tale of the developments beginning with the agreement between the Amir and

the Government of India and ending with the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention. Indo-Afghan relations were a reflex of, and determined by, the contemporary international diplomacy. Rise and fall of Russian prestige in the international sphere together with the relative strength of British position determined the nature and intensity of British pressure on the Amir. The author has devoted two chapters to the analysis of international politics and has thereby helped clear appreciation of Indo-Afghan relationship The signing of Triple Alliance weakened Russia's position and relatively increased British power, and this is reflected in the comparatively pacific attitude of Ripon and Dufferin, as well as the quietitude of Russian policy in Asia. But the drift towards Franco-Russian Dual Alliance and its consummation in the military and political pact revived Russian aggressiveness At the same time British isolationism made them conscious of danger from their rival Lansdowne's forward policy and its continuance till the days of Curzon were the consequence of this psychosis of fear. Again the growing menace of German imperialistic rivalry brought England, France and Russia into one camp and the Convention of 1907 resulted in the division of spheres of influence and non-aggressive temper towards Afghanistan These chapters on International situation are of a valuable contribution of Dr. Tripathi and heighten the usefulness of his work

Dr Tripathi has been able to employ the new sources of information contained in the official despatches, foreign proceedings of the Government of India and the private correspondence between the Viceroys and Secretaries of State, which are veritable mine of information, to the best purpose. These have enhanced the value of his book which is an original contribution and leads forward to a clear understanding of the most important and intricate problem of India's relations with its immediate neighbour to the north-west In these pages is clearly revealed the crookedness of British diplomacy and their endeavours to subordinate an independent or at times semi-independent prince because it was necessary in the interest of their empire This book has developed out of Dr. Tripathi's thesis and is a welcome addition to the historical literature on the subject of India's foreign policy and specially relations with Afghanistan It is a frank, unprejudiced account of British policy.

Of course the story is based pre-eminently on British sources as Afghan official papers are not available to Indian scholars. But perhaps their absence does not detract from the merit of the book which has sought to analyse British policy and present a vivid picture of India's relations with its bordering states I heartily welcome this book and congratulate the author on its production.

Allahabad.
20th March, 1973

Bisheshwar Prasad

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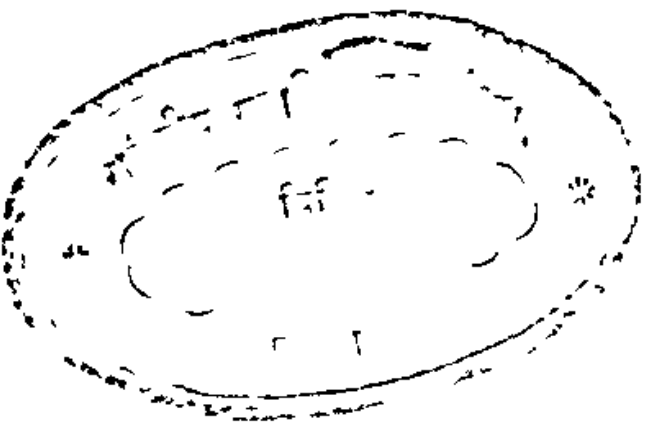

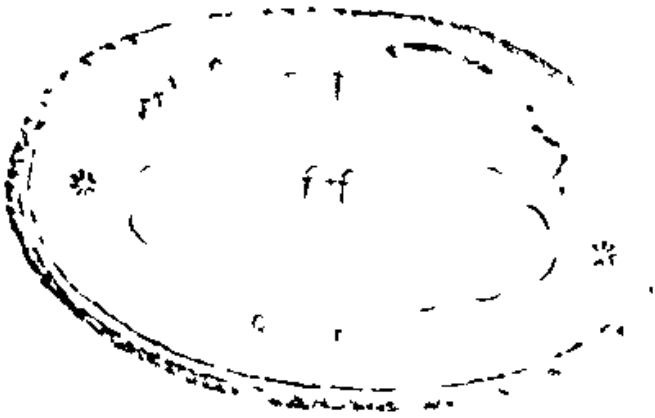

1

INTRODUCTION

The Franco-Russian designs on India, in the first decade of the nineteenth century, were one of the most important factors which influenced British policy now projected into the wider field of Asian politics. British concern for the safety of their Empire in India gave them an interest in the Eastern Question also which compelled them to maintain a close watch on the situation in the Ottoman Empire. The Anglo-Russian conflict in the mid-century was temporarily suspended by the Peace of Paris, but with the resurgence of chauvinistic nationalism of the component units of the Turkish Empire, and the support of Russian Pan-Slavism, the Near East once again became an arena of Anglo-Russian rivalry. Moreover the rise of a strong German power in Central Europe, acting as a block to the Russian expansion westward, led St. Petersburg to seek dominion in Central Asia or Persia, in quest of markets or an ice-free port. These developments reacted on the policies of England, with the result that from 1807 to the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention in 1907 the two Powers were in a continuous state of tension, occasionally verging on warfare which was always averted by a narrow margin. This perennial diplomatic irritant had its natural effect on British policies and conditioned the attitude and conduct of the Government of India in its relations with the neighbouring principalities towards the north-west.

In 1807 the Shah of Persia signed an agreement with France,

final collapse of Persia and inaugurated an era of Russia's economic and political penetration into that country. By the Treaty of Turkmanchai in 1828, Persia had to cede some of her fertile provinces, and pay an indemnity of thirty million silver roubles, and agree to yield commercial privileges to the Czar's Government. This treaty was definitely injurious to British influence in Persia, in whose place was now substituted Russian influence which did not hesitate to pander to the aggressive instincts of the Shah, whose energy henceforth was directed to the recovery of provinces on his eastern frontier. This led to a conflict with Herat and Afghanistan and "introduced a new factor in British policy".

Herat became the main object of Persian activity and from 1832 to 1857 it was besieged more than once, and for a short period actually occupied. This, in its turn, gave rise to the apprehension in England that if the Shah succeeded in taking Herat he would in all probability strive to grab Kabul and Kandahar, and in this way the influence of St. Petersburg would penetrate Afghanistan without any apparent effort on her part, and Great Britain would have to bear a heavy strain for meeting the demands of the situation thus created.[4] The first siege of Herat in 1833 proved fruitless. Herat was besieged again in 1837 but the prompt action on the part of the British Government forced the Shah of Persia to withdraw without concluding any agreement with the ruler there. However, "the campaign against Herat in which Persia now engaged was the ultimate cause of the first Afghan war, ..."[5]

Prior to 1837 the Government of India had paid very little attention to the developments in Afghanistan. To minimise the threat of the Treaty of Tilsit, Lord Minto had decided to send a Mission to Lahore and Afghanistan, to explore the possibility of a combination in case of a Franco-Russian aggression against India, and incidentally to develop the British object of markets and trade facilities."[6] For this purpose Elphinstone was sent on a mission to Kabul in 1809. However, later when, in 1837, Persia threatened Herat with the assistance and instigation of Russia, the English became apprehensive of her designs towards Afghanistan. "In this

4. P. Sykes, *A History of Persia* (London, 1915, 3rd edition, 1930, Reprinted, 1951) II, 325.
5. *Ibid*, 324.
6. G. MacMunn, *Afghanistan from Darius to Ammanullah* (London, 1929) 83.

situation germinated the policy of 'preserving the independence and securing the friendship of the Government of Afghanistan', which henceforth continued to be the basis of Britain's Central Asian diplomacy "[7] But Burnes' Mission to Afghanistan proved a failure, and the unsympathetic attitude of the Government of India compelled the Amir to feel inclined to reciprocate the friendly overtures of Russia. This move of the Afghan ruler gave an opportunity to Lord Auckland to declare war against him, and place Shah Shuja, a weakling who could act as a "subordinate agent" of the Indian Government, on the throne of Kabul. This war proved disastrous for the British and ultimately Dost Muhammad was restored to the throne of Afghanistan Thus the Government of India had to accept a sovereign whom they had forcibly deposed and defeated, but who ended by forcing his recognition upon them However, after this there was a lull in the Indo-Afghan relations for quite some time, and it was only in the early fifties that the British Government's interest in Central Asia was revived.

Once again Herat became the object of Persian designs, but it did not take long for the English to frustrate her ambitions. The Shah had to sign a treaty in 1853 by which he engaged not to send troops on any account to the territory of Herat, excepting when troops from without attacked the place.[8] However, this friendly gesture was shortlived and the diplomatic ties were broken in 1855. Persia's threatening attitude towards Herat threw the Amir of Kabul into the arms of Great Britain, and in 1854, the Afghan ruler sent his son Ghulam Haidar to negotiate a treaty with Sir John Lawrence, at Peshawar.[9] Besides, the expanding influence of Russia in Central Asia had also helped in bringing the two Governments together. It was thought that Afghanistan would be a more effective barrier against Russian advance than Persia Herat was important for the safety of Afghanistan and India, hence it was considered desirable that the two Governments should come to an agreement and become friendly in the face of common danger. Therefore, the two Governments signed an agreement of "perpetual peace and friendship" The ruler of Kabul promised to be the friend of the friends of the

7 Bisheshwar Prasad, *op, cit.*, 7.

8 C U Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads* (Calcutta. 1909) XII, Persia, No XVII, 72

9. P Sykes, *A History of Afghanistan* (London, 1940) II, 65

East India Company and the enemy of its enemies. But this agreement was not based on reciprocal obligation, which was essential as a guarantee for the loyalty of the parties concerned. However, Dost Muhammad remained faithful to his ally, and the Persian occupation of Herat in 1856 cemented his friendship and led to the Treaty of 1857.

The British took prompt and dual action to meet the exigencies of the situation. Great Britain declared war against Persia in order to bring pressure on the Shah, and compel him to withdraw from Herat. She also, by the agreement of January 1857 granted the Amir a subsidy of £ 10,000 per year for the duration of hostilities "on the understanding that the money was to be spent on his army under the supervision of British Officers." These officers were to be stationed outside Kabul for directing military operations and supervising the expenditure of money These terms were meant only for the war-period. But the concluding clause of the treaty was of lasting effect as it related to the appointment of an Indian agent at the court of the Amir of Afghanistan.

The British occupied the island of Kharak and marched on Bushire and Mohammara. Their naval and land action against Persia, and the Afghan pressure on Herat, forced the Shah's Government to sue for peace. According to the terms of the Treaty of Paris (March 1857), the Shah agreed to relinquish all claims to sovereignty over the territory and city of Herat and the countries of Afghanistan.[10] In case of differences between the Governments of Persia and Afghanistan, the Shah agreed to refer them to the friendly offices of the British Government, and not to resort to arms unless those efforts had failed.[11]

This treaty established an improvement in Indo-Persian relations. Sirdar Sultan Ahmad Khan became the new ruler of Herat and acknowledged the suzerainty of the Shah; and in 1858 he foiled the British and Russian bids to have a dominant influence there. However, after the treaty of Paris, Kabul, instead of Teheran, became the centre of political gravity. Henceforth, the Government of India treated Afghanistan as a buffer state; and the friendship

10. Aitchison, XII, *op cit.*, No. XVIII, Article, VI, 77-8.

11. *Ibid.*

and integrity of the Afghan ruler became essential for the security of British empire in India, and her supremacy in Central Asia.[12]

The apprehension on the part of the English of the indirect pressure of St Petersburg through Persia over Herat and Afghanistan, entangled the Government of India in the Central Asian affairs. The policy of the Indian and British Governments was to make Persia and Afghanistan as important bulwarks against Russian bogey, and all efforts of British diplomacy were directed towards the achievement of this object.

After the Crimean War, the Government of St. Petersburg; being frustrated in its designs in the Near East, was making a steady advance in Central Asia and the Far East. But this gradual Russian advance at this juncture did not create any serious alarm in the British mind, which was further stilled in 1864 by Prince Gortchakoff's circular, indicating Russia's reluctance to acquire more territory in Central Asia. This easily satisfied the British statesmen, and it was not till the subjugation of Tashkent and Bokhara that they realized the danger to their Central Asian markets, and this awareness activated a sense of commercial jealousy and political rivalry. Before 1864, the Indian Government had maintained its equanimity even though St. Petersburg was making strides in the Central Asian region. This was possible because Lawrence had successfully negotiated the agreements of 1855 and 1857 with the ruler of Afghanistan. His policy was one of friendship with the ruler of the country but he was not prepared either to involve the Government of India in any commitments or to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, and he was positively against the entry of any Englishman into that country. Dost Muhammad was a strong ruler, and his presence at the helm of affairs in the Afghan Kingdom, was a guarantee of her integrity and independence. The relations of the Indian Government with Dost Muhammad were quite friendly and the treaty of 1855 was then believed to be adequate for the safety of India, because the inclusion of Herat and Kandahar had strengthened the Amir's position, and had interposed an effective barrier to all approaches to India from the north-west. Besides, the profound influence of the First Afghan War had not been lost on Lawrence, and any change in the policy at this juncture would have created suspicion in the Afghan mind. Dost Muhammad remained loyal to his friend, and from 1841 to 1863 the policy of a strong and pros-

perous Afghanistan, desired by the Government of India, was possible under him.

His death in 1863 was the signal for a civil war amongst his sons. On that occasion the Indian Government declared "that we will not interfere in the struggle, that we will not aid either party, that we will leave the Afghans to settle their own quarrels, and that we are willing to be on terms of amity and good-will with the nation, and their Rulers de facto." 13 These were the main features of Lawrences' policy, and the Indian Government was not prepared to deviate from its settled policy of neutrality, unless either Sher Ali or any other contestant and claimant for the throne of Kabul tried to seek help from Persia or Russia. "A new development was given at this time to the policy of the Government of India by the proceedings of Sher Ali himself."[14] He was keen to recover the sovereignty of Afghanistan, and applied for British assistance. But despairing of help from that quarter, he showed an inclination to seek aid from Persia. This invocation of a foreign power by Sher Ali provided a new stimulus to the policy of the Government of India. In the changed circumstances the Viceroy was prepared to modify his policy, and he made a suggestion that if Sher Ali sought foreign aid. His rivals should be openly helped with a moderate subsidy and arms, because resistance against Sher Ali would lead to the realisation of the interests of British Empire in India. The policy of the Government of India at this time was to maintain relations with the *de facto* ruler of the country, and so long as that ruler was not unfriendly to them, they were always prepared to renew to him the same terms and conditions as obtained under his predecessor. Lawrence believed this method to be far more effective in the maintenance of Britain's influence in Afghanistan, and any forward move was to be undertaken only when all other means had proved unsuccessful.

Lawrence's policy of neutrality in the Afghan conflicts had the support and approval of the British Government. But this policy could be successfully maintained only in the condition of virtual isolation of Afghan Kingdom and the willingness of the contestants

12 Bisheshwar Prasad, *op. Cit*, 12.

13. *Foreign Department Proceedings* (Foreign Dept. Progs.), Political A. April 1866, Nos 191-5, No 195.

14. C. Aitchison, *Lord Lawrence and the Reconstruction of India under the Crown* (Oxford, 1894) 183

to fight each other without any foreign aid. "It also presumed the adherence of every contestant ultimately to British friendship, as contained in the stipulations of 1855. Any change in the premises was bound to affect the integrity of his policy, and both the Government of India and Her Majesty's Government made no secret of it."[15] In essence the fundamentals of Lawrence's policy were the independence of Afghanistan and her fulfilment of the terms of friendship with the Indian Government.[16]

However, the rapid advance of Russia after 1865 created a sense of alarm in some military circles both in India and Great Britain. British statesmen, who watched the territorial expansion of St Petersburg in the east, were divided into groups. The Russophobes considered every step made by Russia in Asia as a direct threat to British empire in India They wanted that the Government of India should anticipate the coming Russian invasion by a forward policy, and bring Afghanistan and Persia more and more under its influence by active, interfering and expansive attitude. Their opponents took a calmer view of the situation and minimised the possibility of an invasion of India by St. Petersburg. In their opinion the policy of non-aggression in Afghanistan and understanding with Russia could ensure the safety of their empire in India.

These conflicting views were expressed in 1868 and a new factor in the shape of Russia's advance towards Afghanistan had intervened to affect the foundations of Lawrence's policy. His policy of neutrality and of awaiting the turn of events in Afghanistan had been independent of that factor. But when Russian advance threatened to be a reality, he had to make necessary modifications without changing the essentials of his policy He was still in favour of maintaining Afghanistan as a buffer state between India and the Czar's possessions in Central Asia, and making her an outlying bulwark of British India, whose chief security against invasion, in his opinion, lay in a firm and sympathetic government within her borders.[17] She might be able to defy attack if the masses felt contented with the British rule, and if the feudatory princes remained loyal, and the intelligentsia found scope for their just political ambitions. Thus he did not believe in any forward move but placed more reliance on the

15 Bisheshwar Prasad, *op Cit*, 29

16 *Ibid*, 27.

17. F H Skrine, *The Expansion of Russia, 1815-1900* (Cambridge, 1903) 236,

contentment of Indians and opening up of communication up to the strategic line of defence on the frontier.[18]

At the same time a change had come in his policy towards Afghanistan due to the advance of St Petersburg in Central Asia. Sher Ali had beaten down all his rivals and recovered his throne, and had been welcomed back to Kabul by the people and the army. The Governor-General refused to enter into an offensive and defensive alliance with him, but showed interest in maintaining the security of his dominions from foreign aggression provided he remained faithful to his engagements. The Viceroy was prepared to support Amir's independence but the manner of doing it was to rest with the Government of India. In pursuance of this policy he helped the Amir with money and arms, without seeking any return for the assistance rendered except that ruler's fidelity towards the British Besides Lawrence had also recommended that a settlement should be negotiated with Russia. The new arrangement with Sher Ali was made without definite assurances on either side, and it did not attach him unequivocally to the Indian Government. However, Sher Ali was grateful for the support, and was prepared to visit India and meet the Viceroy when the situation in Afghanistan would make it practicable.

Lawrence left India in January 1869; and it cannot be denied that his policy had proved successful in securing the goodwill and friendship of the Amir and maintaining peace. "His Viceroyalty was on the whole peaceful and uneventful. But it was a germinal time, a time in which seeds were sown that brought forth much fruit in later years." [19]

Lord Mayo who succeeded him maintained the policy of his predecessor and developed it. In March 1869, the Amir met the Governor-General at Ambala. By that time the Russian influence had extended to the shores of the Oxus, and their continued advance towards the Amir's dominions made it indispensable for Sher Ali to know where he stood between the two great European Powers in Asia. Therefore at the Ambala meeting the Amir desired the Government of India to ensure the security of his dynasty and to guarantee him aid in case of external attack. But the Afghan ruler received no definite guarantee against foreign aggression, and he was not promi-

18. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Pol A. October 1867, Nos. 133-40. No. 134.
19. C. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, 16

sed "either treaty, fixed subsidy or dynastic pledges." However, he was given money, arms and ammunition, with an understanding that he would get further help from time to time. The British were not prepared to go any further than this and involve themselves in entangling obligations, in spite of the fact, that they were keen for the Amir's friendship in view of the increasing Russian danger, and for the promotion of their trade and commerce The Afghan ruler seemed satisfied for the time being, because England's friendship, even though based on vague assurances, was sufficient to enhance his prestige and demoralise his rivals at home. Besides, the Russian danger, though real, was not immediate and the British were trying to come to an understanding with their rival in Central Asia.

Russian conquest of Tashkent, Samarkand and Great Britain's interest in Afghanistan and Central Asia made the British Government conscious of the need of asking for a delimitation of the respective spheres of influence in 1869 But the Government of India found little to enthuse over Lord Clarendon's proposals for recognising a neutral territory between Russia's and England's possessions in Central Asia, The Indian Government was not in favour of declaring neutrality with regard to the frontier states. They had been striving to establish their influence in these neighbouring countries, and a declaration of this kind, and a treaty with the Government of St. Petersburg regarding these states, would have cut at the very root of their policy It was imposible for the expanding British empire in India to tolerate any interference and hinderance in the process of its advance Therefore, it was but natural for the Government of India to oppose any definite treaty with the Czar's Government for creating Afghanistan or any other frontier state as a neutral zone

However, in 1869, Russia declared that Afghanistan lay outside her sphere of influence The upper Oxus was recognised as roughly the boundary dividing the British and Russian spheres of influence, and this made Her Majesty's Government keen to secure a proper delimitation of the northern frontiers of Afghanistan. A similar policy had been followed with regard to Amir's western boundary by laying down the Seistan line A parallel attempt was made for the security of Kalat by demarcating her frontiers with Persia. Thus Lord Mayo made efforts to strengthen the political and

strategic position of the British empire in Central Asia by creating a chain of subsidised states which would act as buffers against Russia, and would also operate as foremost and most effective points of vantage for British influence in that region.

Economic, military and strategic considerations motivated the rapid advance of St. Petersburg all over Asia. Russian pace in Central Asia had increased considerably, particularly from 1873 onwards. However, till 1873 Sher Ali did not feel gravely alarmed by her expansion in that region At the same time the Amir and the Government of India had faith in each others integrity and friendship, and the policy of Lawrence continued in the time of Mayo and Northbrook. Lord Northbrook was opposed to expansion of any kind, and regarding policy towards Afghanistan he was not prepared to go any further than his predecessors.

In July 1873, Sher Ali's Prime Minister Nur Muhammad Shah had a conference with the Viceroy at Simla. The main point discussed there related to the agreement between England and Russia regarding Afghanistan's northern boundaries, and its effect on the Indo-Afghan relations.[20] Northbrook, like his predecessor, reserved the discretion of the Government of India in the matter of the extent of aid to the Amir and the occasion for it. In fact, the Governor-General almost repeated the assurance given to Amir Sher Ali by Lord Mayo.

"The Simla Conference is a turning point in the history of the Indo-Afghan relations and marks the inauguration of a policy which, being inspired by the developments in the Near East, inevitably led to conflict."[21] By the end of 1875 opinion was growing amongst a section of the people in Great Britain, to reverse the existing policy with regard to Afghanistan, as a result of the developments in the Near East. Lord Salisbury, the Secretary of State, was anxious to protect England's interests beyond the northern frontier of India, and desired to establish closer relations with the Kabul Government. He suggested the stationing of British Residents or agents at Kabul and Herat, and possibly Kandahar too. Northbrook's Government deprecated such a line of action except with the Amir's consent.

20. Bisheshwar Prasad, *op. Cit.*, 137.
21. *Ibid*, 145.

Salisbury believed that Sher Ali was genuinely alarmed at Russian advance, and this feeling should be exploited by the Government of India to make the Amir wish for a British Mission in Afghanistan. The Governor-General knew the Amir's attitude pretty well, and he was doubtful of such a proposal being entertained, unless it promised substantial gains to the Afghan ruler. Therefore he was not prepared to make a move forward, which would be subversive of his conciliatory policy and might tend to create suspicion on the other side.

However, Northbrook resigned his post soon after and Lytton took over as the Governor-General of India. "The delicate balance of the policy of non-interference was already getting seriously upset when in the spring of 1876 Lord Northbrook was succeeded by Lord Lytton "[22] Amir Sher Ali was becoming increasingly alienated from the British, firstly, due to Northbrook's refusal to give him complete assurance of protection which he desired, and secondly, due to the new Governor-General's keenness to intrude British influence at Kabul, and make the Amir admit an English Resident or agent into his country Lytton, on his side, was growing more determined in the enforcement of his policy, and after the failure of Peshawar Conference in 1877, he made no secret of his intention of the gradual disintegration and weakening of the Afghan power. A more positive policy and a forward move up to the Oxus to meet Russia half way in Central Asia, were held to be imperative at this time There was a vague impression in the British mind that the ruler of Afghanistan was "gradually drifting into political relationship with the Russian empire" Disraeli wanted to make Great Britain the imperial mistress of the East and it was necessary to counter-act the influence of St Petersburg in the Afghan Kingdom, and bring the Afghan ruler under closer British control

The instructions given to the Viceroy were explicit as regards the object in view, but they left him a wide discretion as the method by which that purpose was to be attained. "Briefly, he was to concede the demands made by the Ameer in 1869 and 1873, and in particular, to insist upon the reception of a British Mission in return."[23] Thus Lytton was prepared to make some concessions

22 W K Fraser-Tytler, *Afghanistan* (London, 1950) 136

23 A W. Ward and G P Gooch, ed., *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, 1923) III, 81.

provided the Amir agreed to "the location of British agents", reception of British Mission and "development of communications." Sher Ali found these conditions unacceptable because they would be prejudicial to the independence of Afghanistan. Besides, the Viceroy's method of approach and his tactics of intimidation made the Amir suspicious of British designs and alienated him completely.

The English occupied Quetta, exercised control over Dir, Swat, and Chitral and tried to open Kurram Valley, ostensibly with the object of safeguarding the Indian frontier and strengthening it against Russian invasion. But these steps were also intended to frighten the Afghan ruler to make him accept the new demands. The situation in the Near East, Russian threat to Merv and Herat, and Sher Ali's stiff attitude towards the British demands, governed Lytton's Afghan policy. The Governor-General was keen to establish a commanding position at Herat, and therefore the intransigence of the Amir led him to adopt the alternative course of detaching the western portion of Afghanistan from the latter's control, and bringing it directly under British influence. To attain the objective of maintaining a strong yet docile Government in Afghanistan, the Viceroy was now prepared to disintegrate that Kingdom, so as to weaken the Kabul Government, and render Sher Ali impotent for harm.

In the summer of 1877 war broke out between Russia and Turkey, The avowed object of English policy was to thwart the ambitions of St. Petersburg; and the Treaty of Berlin in June 1878 annihilated Russia's influence in Turkey. The Russian Government meeting with a check in Europe, utilised the advantageous position in Central Asia to tip the balance in their favour. They applied the "counter-irritant" in Persia and Afghanistan . In the summer of 1878 they despatched a diplomatic mission to the Amir under General Stolietoff, who brought letters from General Kaufmann to the Afghan ruler to gain his support for Russian interests. Amir Sher Ali was studying the situation keenly. He was watching the two hostile empires expanding from the opposite directions and coming dangerously close to each other, and he wanted to exploit the situation to his advantage.

However, the appearance of a Russian Mission at Kabul convinced the Governor-General of India that some resolute action should be taken, and he urgently obtained permission from the

Secretary of State to insist on the reception of a British Mission at Kabul. Lord Lytton was bent upon forcing his way into Afghanistan. He got the long sought for opportunity of dominating that state and having a ruler on the throne of Kabul who would be subordinate to British authority. He had set notions of frontier defence, and he used the incident at Ali Masjid for giving vent to his ideas and intentions Lytton's obstinacy involved the two countries India and Afghanistan, once again in a war in November 1878. The Amir appealed to St Petersburg for help, but he merely received the advice to make peace with the British, as Russia and Great Britain were then at peace. Sher Ali's cause was lost. He fled and ultimately "worn out with illness and the knowledge that he had been betrayed by Russia", he died at Mazar-i-Sharif on 21 February 1879

Cavagnari negotiated the Treaty of Gandamak with the new Amir Yakub Khan, on 26 May 1879. Yakub had agreed to receive a British Mission at Kabul In July 1879, Sir Louis Cavagnari was appointed as English envoy to Afghanistan, and in September he was massacred with his staff, and the Residency was burnt. Thus with the massacre of the British Mission "the forward policy had tumbled for the moment in blood and ruin,..." It entailed the loss of valuable lives, and was a great blow to British prestige. This collapse of the policy of scientific frontier made the situation very serious. A British force arrived before Kabul on 8 October, and on 12 October, General Roberts made his public entry into that city. Amir Yakub. Khan had abdicated and was sent to India.

With the departure of Yakub the political future of Afghanistan became obscure. There was no Government, and the Amir's abdication had provided the signal for revolt throughout Kabul and its environs. It was suppressed only by the end of December 1879, but the intermittent fighting in the frontier districts still continued throughout 1880. "It was to Lytton's policy of disintegration that, in the apparent absence of any chief strong enough to hold Afghanistan together, the Cabinet came gradually round" [24] But only one important move was actually made for the disintegration of that state, when Kandahar was separated and a Chieftain under British protection was set up there. Before anything definite could be decided

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24 G E. Buckle, *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli* (London, 1920) VI, 483.

about the northern parts of Afghanistan, Sirdar Abdur Rahman appeared in Afghan Turkestan, as a claimant to the throne of Kabul Lord Lytton had started negotiations with him when the Beaconsfield Government was defeated, and the Governor-General resigned leaving the task of settlement to his successor Lord Ripon.

Lord Hartington, the Secretary of State, expressed his opinion on Afghan policy, in his despatch of 21 May 1880. He held the view that the military occupation of Afghanistan was not practicable, and it would bring no permanent order and security. He was in favour of prompt evacuation of Afghanistan, and wanted that such arrangements should be concluded which would afford the prospect of establishing a settled government.

At this time the British Government had only two objects in view. Firstly, they were keen to withdraw the bulk of the forces, engaged in Afghanistan. Secondly, they wanted that a friendly state which could maintain its integrity and manage its affairs without British military aid should be restored on the north-west frontier of India. The evacuation of the country would take place only when the prospect of a stable government had been secured. But Kabul might be evacuated immediately inor der to facilitate Abdur Rahman's work, as the withdrawal of British officers was likely to create confidence and put him at ease. Besides, the Secretary of State was nod in favour of the separation of Kandahar and Herat from Kabul; ant he also desired that Yakub Khan should be reconsidered for the Amirship, in case Abdur Rahman did not prove amenable as a ruler Further, Hartington was also doubtful of the value of establishing advanced military positions in Kurram, Khyber and Pishin, areas ceded by the Treaty of Gandamak. The Secretary of State also laid down the policy regarding assistance to be given to the Ruler of Afghanistan, in case of foreign aggression. The British Government were prepared to renew the assurances offered to Sher Ali by Lord Northbrook in 1873, which meant that upon certain conditions that Government would be willing to support him against unprovoked external attack. But they were not prepared to go beyond North brook's offer and undetake fresh liabilities on behalf of a ruler whose position was not strong and whose policy was not certain. Lytton's successor, Lord Ripon was expected to settle the Afghan problem on these lines, though he was permitted to use his discretion in matters

of detail. Thus the English policy at this time was to reverse Lord Lytton's action and establish, once again, smooth and friendly relations with the neighbouring state by the renunciation of the Forward Policy

With this end in view, the Government of India started negotiations with Abdur Rahman. But he was not prepared to commit himself without knowing his exact position; without knowing either his obligations and benefits, or the extent of his boundaries. He also wanted to know whether the Indo- British Government were still thinking in terms of imposing a British envoy on the Ruler of Afghanistan

Griffin's reply of 14 June became the basis of future Indo-Afghan relations, and it met with Abdur Rahman's approval. He was informed in explicit terms that he could have no political relations with any foreign Power except the British; and in case, any foreign Power should attempt to interfere in the affairs of Afghanistan, and if such interference should lead to unprovoked aggression against that country, then the British Government would be prepared to help the Amir, if necessary, to repel the aggression, if he followed the advice of that Government with regard to his external relations [25] Abdur Rahman was also given to understand that the whole of Afghanistan, except Kandahar, would form part of his dominions But the Government did not give him the guarantee of the possession of Herat Further, he was assured that the English Government would not interfere in the internal affairs of his Kingdom, and a British envoy would not be forced on him. It also recommended the stationing of a Muhammadan Agent as before at Kabul for the sake of convenience in carrying on friendly intercourse, provided he agreed to the proposal Abdur Rahman, in his letter of 22 June, accepted the terms offered in Griffin's letter. At a Darbar held on 22 July 1880, Sirdar Abdur Rahman was formally acknowledged and recognised as the Ruler of Kabul, and a letter carried to him his recognition and the terms of his relationship with the Indian Government. With the conclusion of this agreement Kabul was handed over to the new Amir, and the British troops retired to India

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25 Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan, ed , *The Life of Abdur Rahman : Amir of Afghanistan* (London 1900) I, 197-8.

Later on the British transferred Kandahar to him on 21 April 1881, and after some time he was able to incorporate Herat and Seistan into his Kingdom. The Indian Government also decided to free the Afridis of the Khyber Pass and the Turis of the Kurram Valley.[26]

Thus Gladstone Cabinet's policy of withdrawal from Afghanistan was a desirable change from the aggressive action of the preceding Government, and Disraeli was vehement in denouncing it. But the recognition of Abdur Rahman as an independent ruler resulted in his bringing the whole of Afghanistan under his authority, and establishing a strong government The Government of India aided him in the establishment of his power by granting him a sum to the extent of 20 lakhs of rupees along with some arms and ammunition. Further, it felt satisfied with the old system of maintaining an Indian Agent at Kabul. The British did not enter into any formal treaty with the Amir, but in a Memorandum of Obligation he was given to understand in unqualified terms that he could have no relations with any other power except Great Britain.

However, the Russian activities in Central Asia, and the internal condition of Afghanistan alarmed the Amir, and in 1882 he expressed a desire to meet the Governor-General. Lord Ripon was not inclined to encourage his coming to India, because he thought the "result of his visit would be either to involve us in a large expenditure of money and in inconvenient and entangling engagements, or else to send him back to his own country disgusted and alienated."[27] The Government of India wanted "to play a waiting game", and leave the relations with the Amir in their existing condition as long as the Afghan ruler would let them do so.[28] The Governor-General was not prepared to go beyond the words expressed in 1880 though he agreed to the amplification of its import. Consequently, the Indian Government reiterated and reaffirmed the assurances given in 1880 , because "some doubts were entertained in some quarters as to the validity" of the declaration of 1880, and also because the Amir had a fear that the Government of St. Petersburg contemplated a hostile movement against his territories. In his letter dated 22 February 1883, Lord

26. Bisheswar Prasad, *op. cit.*, 226.
27. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Secret External, April 1883, Nos. 350-317, K.W.
28. Ibid.

Ripon once again assured the Afghan ruler that if any foreign Power should attempt to interfere in Afghanistan, and if such interference should lead to unprovoked aggression on his dominions, the British Government would be prepared to aid him, to such extent and in such manner as might appear to them necessary, in repelling it, provided that the Amir unreservedly followed the advice of that Government in regard to his external relations.[29] The Viceroy well realised that to safeguard British interests it was essential to isolate Afghanistan from all other foreign influences, and this was possible only by having a control over Amir's foreign policy. The declarations of 1880 and 1883 established the convention by which the direction of Amir's foreign relations came into the hands of the Government of India. In fact, it was "a consummation which, without being explicit, was inherent in the declarations made by Lord Mayo at Ambala or by Lord Northbrook at Simla", but these later declarations were "more specific, and defined unequivocally the obligations of the two parties and thereby established their friendship on a more concrete foundation."[30]

However, the Amir in his letter of 26 April 1883, once again expressed alarm at Russian advance and applied to the British for pecuniary aid, and expressed his inability to make arrangements for the defence of frontiers, or to pay his troops at Herat.[31] The Viceroy's letter to the Secretary of State, dated 6 June 1883, once again suggested "that proper course would be to enter into negotiations direct with Russia, and if possible make a treaty with her. If Her Majesty's Government do not approve of this course, then we think that annual subsidy of 12 lakhs should be offered to Amir to enable him to provide for the defence of frontier."[32] The object of the Government of India was to obtain in the form of a regular public treaty, a distinct engagement on the part of the Government of St. Petersburg not to interfere in any way in the internal or external affairs of Afghanistan. The Secretary of State in his reply of 8 June 1883, informed Ripon "that it would not be expedient at the present time to enter into such negotiations", but approved the

29 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec E, April 1883, Nos 350-71, No. 367

30 Bisheshwar Prasad- *op cit*, 231.

31 *Foreign Dept, Progs*, Sec E, July 1883. Nos 69-107, No 69.

32. *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. E, July 1883, Nos 69-107, No. 75.

offer of an annual subsidy of 12 lakhs of rupees to the Amir.[33] The grant of this subsidy took effect from 1 June 1883, and it solved the Afghan ruler's financial difficulty for some time, and he postponed the plan of visiting India

Thus we find that the Government of India were willing to fulfil their obligations to Afghanistan in case of external danger, and this willingness on their part created mutual trust and made Abdur Rahman a faithful ally. This friendship was based upon reciprocal obligations, and non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. The British policy of having a strong and friendly Afghan power, which could act as a buffer against Russian designs towards India, had originated long ago. The policy reached its culmination at this time, when the Government of India found in the person of Abdur Rahman a strong and friendly ruler, who seemed to fulfil all their hopes and aspirations. Therefore, in 1883, the Indo-Afghan relations were cordial; the Government of India was giving all possible support to the Amir, and was conscientiously avoiding interference in his internal matters.

Besides, the steady advance of Russia towards Afghanistans' north-west frontier made the Indian Government anxious to ensure the safety of Afghan Kingdom against encroachments by St. Petersburg. Amir's north-western boundaries had never been properly delimited and it was necessary to come to an agreement with the Russian Government regarding the northern line of the frontier. Afghanistan's safety and integrity were necessary for the security of British empire in India. Therefore, the Government of India promptly came forward to fulfil the obligation of protecting that State from foreign aggression, and started negotiations with Russia for the demarcation of Amir's boundaries on that side.

33 *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec E., July 1883, Nos 69-107, No. 76.

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SETTLEMENT OF AFGHANISTAN'S NORTH-WEST FRONTIER 1884-1887

The tension between Great Britain and Russia grew with every Russian advance in Central Asia. During the time of Nicholas I (1825-55), Russians had made considerable progress in the Near East, which further aggravated Anglo-Russian rivalry. Russians had old association with Central Asia, and Great Britain fully realised that they were the only European power which could pose a threat to Britain's political and economic supremacy in Asia. Therefore, any substantial advance by St. Petersburg in the east excited the British apprehensions, because Russia was the most formidable rival of English interests, and they saw in her advance a potential threat to their empire in India. Besides, England would never appreciate the idea of being thwarted in her design of exploiting the commerce of Central Asia, and Russia's advance was bound to affect her economic advantages in that region. Therefore, a struggle between the two Powers for supremacy in this part of Asia was inherent in the logic of events.

England and Russia had been advancing towards Afghanistan from the south and the north respectively. The British considered Russian activities in the Near East as a preparation for making

a move towards India. Therefore, they tried to block their rival wherever they could, "along an imaginary line stretching from Constantinople through Persia to Central Asia and China."[1] The Russian expansion in Central Asia continued, and the southward extension of the Russian frontier, until it reached the Afghan border, had a great effect on Russia's relations with England, and therefore on the international situation.[2]

Russian inroads into the Asiatic steppes during the first half of the nineteenth century, brought them to the vicinity of the Muslim khanates of Khokand, Khiva, and Bokhara; and by 1864 they had gained complete control of the western shore of the Caspian Sea, north of the Persian border. The rapid advance of Russian territories in Central Asia, raised alarm in the British mind. But their apprehension of the Imperialistic designs of St. Petersburg towards India, was for a time pacified by Prince Gortcha-Koff's Circular of 1864. It stressed the fact that Russia had no interest in increasing its territory, and was willing to avoid all complications on its frontiers, because frontier troubles were bound to hamper its internal development.[3] This was the proper moment for coming to a formal agreement with Russia respecting their policy and their relative positions in Central Asia, but the British Government let the opportunity slip. This circular, however, did not prevent the Government of St. Petersburg from further territorial acquisitions in this region.

From 1864 onwards Russia made rapid advance in Central Asia. In 1864 the cities af Turkestan fell a prey to Russia's aggressive policy, and in October that year Tashkent was also stormed but the Russian forces had to retreat from there. Tashkent ultimately fell in June 1865, and the city of Bokhara was captured in May 1868. These new developments aggravated the sense of political jealousy and commercial rivalry, and the Russian quest for a secure frontier could not be looked upon with indifference by the Indo-British Government. It became imperative for them to take effective measures to check Russia's further advance.

The safety of British empire in India was the prime motive which prompted the Indian Government to devise ways and means

1. Rostovsky, *op. cit.*, 113.
2. Michael T. Florinsky, *Russia: A History and Interpretation* (New York, 1955) II, 979-80.
3. Bisheshwar Prasad, *op. cit.*, 41.

to halt the Russian expansion towards Afghanistan. Two views for ensuring the safety of India were expressed in 1868. Lumsden held the view that India could be made safe by a policy of non-aggression in Afghanistan and understanding with Russia. In Rawlinson's view it was essential to move forward and forestall Russian influence in Kabul. But Lawrence refused to take a forward step. The British had failed to propose to St. Petersburg a delimitation of their spheres of influence in 1864, but the establishment of Russian authority in Tashkent and Samarkand, and the modified British policy towards Afghanistan made them conscious of the necessity of asking for such a delimitation in 1869. Lord Clarendon proposed the recognition of a neutral territory between the Central Asian possessions of Great Britain and Russia, but these proposals found little favour in India.

However, in 1869 Russia recognised Afghanistan as lying beyond her sphere of influence. The upper Oxus was taken as broadly indicating the line dividing the Russian and British spheres of influence, but this line could not be confirmed as dividing the two zones, unless the actual delimitation of the frontiers of Afghanistan took place. In 1869 the negotiations had started with the proposal to create buffer states but it did not go further than the recognition of the spheres of influence [4]

Russia's expansionist tendency once more became manifest when Khiva was overrun by its troops in the spring of 1873. Khiva became a Russian protectorate, and it produced a great deal of excitement in England. In 1876 Khokand was annexed by Russia under the name of the Ferghana region This expansion was made by St Petersburg, in spite of the correspondence between Granville and Gortchakoff, "in continuation of the earlier correspondence commenced by Lord Clarendon,"[5] and the assurance in 1873, by Count Schouvaloff, an emissary from the Czar, who had arrived on a confidential mission to Granville, that there was no intention to annex Khiva, and an expedition to that place was only meant to punish the brigands [6]

Once again, due to Russia's scant respect for previous assura-

4 Bisheshwar Prasad, *op cit*, 46

5 Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, *The Life of Granville, 1815-1891* (London, 1906) II, 408.

6 *Ibid*, 408-9

nces, and assurances were meaningless in the absence of a formal engagement, the Government of India was brought face to face with the danger to Merv, which followed from the Russian conquest of Khiva. The fall of Khiva meant the commencement of Russia's gradual penetration into the steppes occupied by the warlike Tekke Turkoman tribes General Lomakin's measures against the Turkomans endangered Merv, and increased the possibility of Persia being threatened into submission to St. Petersburg, and it also increased the danger of domination of important highways leading to India. It is not surprising that under these circumstances even Northbrook's Government was seized by 'Mervousness' which became more intense with the arrival of Lord Lytton [7]

However, Lomakin's Kizil Arvat expedition in 1877 was unsuccessful, and in view of the Balkan crisis it seemed improbable that Russia could make an early move for further advance into the Akkal territory. In the meantime, to counter-act British preparations in Malta, Russia started massing its forces on the Oxus and at Krasnovodsk, a port established by the Russians on the eastern littoral of the Caspain in 1869. Besides, Russian diplomacy in Persia and Afghanistan became active with the object of threatening British foothold in Asia. But the Anglo-Russian antagonism was eased by the Treaty of Berlin, and for some time the Government of India could not devote attention to the Turkoman affairs, due to Second Afghan war. Later on, Russia once again started the process of subjugating Tekke tribes, but the Indo-British Government did not feel unduly alarmed. By 1882 Russia had annexed the whole of Tekke territory upto Ashkabad. "The Government of India and England submitted to the inevitable and had resort to the only alternative of providing for a delimitation of the frontiers of Afghanistan."[8]

Prior to 1882, the British had made several efforts to negotiate an agreement with Russia regarding the spheres of their influence, because the close proximity of the territories of two Imperialist powers was fraught with dangerous possibilities. In 1865 Lord Russell had attempted to negotiate an agreement for the delimitation of their respective spheres of influence, but he had obtained only

7. Bisheshwar Prasad, *op. cit.*, 102.

8. *Ibid*, 113.

vague assurances of Russia's peaceful intentions[9] In 1869 Lord Clarendon proposed the recognition of Afghanistan as the neutral zone between British and Russian possessions, and negotiations continued for several years, but the agreement ultimately arrived at in 1873, was almost invalidated, without much delay, by the annexation of Khiva Every time the British Government was easily outmanoeuvred by the peaceful assurances of St, Petersburg; every time Russia could violate its promises and make relentless acquisition of territories without remorse because it had never bound itself to a policy of non-aggression

However, after the post-war settlement (1879-80) in Afghanistan, the British Government renewed their efforts for the delimitation of frontiers between Afghanistan and Russia. In February 1882 Granville discussed this ticklish problem with the Russian Ambassador Prince Labanov, and desired that the two countries should come to some agreement regarding their policy and position in Asia. This agreement was to be based on the settlement of boundary between Persia and Turkoman country to the point where the Persian frontier touched that of Afghanistan, and the frontier between Russia and Afghanistan. Besides, the agreement arrived at between Clarendon and Gortchakoff relating to Afghanistan's frontiers was accepted by the two Governments as valid The question of a boundary from Khoja Saleh to the north-western point on the Persian frontier was still-left to be decided, and as a result of the agreement between the Governments of London and St. Petersburg, a Commission for the actual demarcation of the boundaries was appointed.

However, in July 1882 the Amir of Afghanistan expressed a desire to visit India and "confer with the British authorities personally", in order to settle completely the question of Afghanistan.[10] It seems quite probable that Amir Abdur Rahman was apprehensive of Russian designs towards Afghanistan, and was keen to request the Government of India to come to a speedy settlement with that power regarding the Russo-Afghan frontier. At the same time the internal condition of Afghanistan was not very satisfactory. and the possibility of his seeking advice and help from the Indian Government in view of major external danger may not be lightly brushed aside. Amir had

9 Florinsky, *op cit*, 985

10 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec E Sept. 1882, Nos 501-10, No. 501

no faith in Russia's peaceful assurances, because though, as late as January 1881, M. de Giers had assured Lord Dufferin that his Government would not undertake further military operations in the region of Merv and Herat, in May 1881, the Russians broke their promise and annexed the Tekke Turkoman territory. Russia's repeated assurances carried very little weight, and the feeling then grew that either its professions were not sincere, or the Czar's Government was not capable of restraining its officers in Asia.[11] At the same time it can also be said that "Russia was forced to advance in Central Asia by the same political and commercial interests which impelled the British Government to advance towards the frontiers of Afghanistan."[12]

In the latter part of 1882 the Amir was seriously alarmed by Russia's approach towards his north-west frontier, and he began "to speak frequently of the necessity of strengthening it."[13] In October 1882,the Amir wrote to the Viceroy and expressed his fear of Russia's hostile intentions towards his country, and desired that the problem of his boundaries should be settled with St. Petersburg through the good offices of the British Government, and if this opportunity was not seized it would be "difficult to act and strengthen the frontiers." Lord Ripon replied in February 1883 and expressed the view that he did not believe that the Amir had any reason to fear a hostile movement from Russia against his territory, and assured him that he should have "no cause of uneasiness because of the engagements of 1880." The Governor-General also informed the Afghan ruler that his north-western boundaries were settled in 1873, and it was doubtful whether it would be a wise course in the Amir's interest to reopen the question, but his representation, on that subject, would receive due consideration.[14]

However, the Viceroy's letter failed to inspire the Amir with confidence, and his letter to Ripon, in April 1883, showed that he was still anxious as to his north-western boundaries and was actively engaged in making preparations for its protection. Abdur Rahman, in his correspondence with the Government of India, further expressed alarm at Russian advance, and stated his inability to make arrange-

11. Florinsky, *op. cit.*, 984.
12. D.K. Ghose, *England and Afghanistan*, (Calcutta, 1960), 26.
13. *Foreign Dept.Progs.*, Secret Frontier, July 1885, Nos. 380-84, No. 381.
14. *Ibid.*

ments for the defence of the frontier, or to pay his troops at Herat. Lord Ripon's reply, in June 1883, stated that he had already given the Amir substantial aid in money and arms, and had informed the Kabul ruler of the obligations of the British Government towards Afghanistan, in his letter of 22 February 1883.[15] The Agreement of 1880, as related earlier, was renewed in 1883, reinforcing its essential features, viz, firstly, that the British were not to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, secondly, that the British were to assume a definite liability to come to Amir's assistance in the event of unprovoked aggression upon him; and thirdly, that the foreign relations of Afghanistan were to be under British guidance and control. Nevertheless, the British obligations arising out of the Agreement of 1883 were based upon two important conditions. Firstly, it was for the British Government to determine the manner and extent of the aid to be given in repelling unprovoked aggression. Secondly, the Amir could have no political relations with any foreign power except the British Government and must unreservedly follow the advice of that Government in regard to his external matters.

Beside renewing old assurances, the British, as mentioned earlier, also granted to the Amir a subsidy of twelve lakhs of rupees a year, as an aid towards meeting the present difficulties in the management of his state, and this sum was to be devoted for the payment of his troops and other measures required for the defence of his north-west frontier.[16] Thus, the Government of India's keenness to support the cause of Abdur Rahman, and their willingness to fulfil the obligations of aiding him against foreign aggression, strengthened the bonds of mutual friendship and trust, and brought about Afghanistan's complete alignment with India.

However, in December 1881, Russia and Persia had signed the Treaty of Teheran, which had fixed their frontier at the fort Baba Dormuz, and the parties concerned had agreed to the appointment of Commissioners for the delimitation of their boundaries. Since this agreement did not include the line towards Merv and Herat, it became a cause of serious concern to Indian and British Governments. As mentioned earlier the British Government wanted to keep Russia, as far away as possible from the frontiers of Afghani-

15 *Ibid*

16 *Foreign Dept Progs*., Sec E., July 1883, Nos. 69-107, No. 78.

stan, but Russia's secret activities and intrigues did not spare Merv, which was ultimately absorbed into the Russian empire in a peaceful manner. On 12 February 1884, the Khan's twenty-four representatives of the four tribes of Merv Turkomans presented themselves at Ashkabad, took the oath of allegiance to the Czar, and invited Russia to govern them.[17] M. de Giers expressed the hope that the British Government would view the measures which were about to be taken by Russia in Merv as being directed only in the interest of peace and good order.[18] Thus, once again the Russians were forced by circumstances to act contrary to their promises, and the Czar's Government occupied Merv, which had been declared to lie outside the sphere of Russia's interest and desire. Further, in the autumn of 1884, they appropriated Sarakhs, on the Perso-Afghan frontier. Under these circumstances, the Government of India wrote to the Secretary of State, that it had become absolutely necessary to come to a clear understanding with Russia as to the exact line of entire northern and north-western frontiers of Afghanistan.[19] They also urged that the Government of St. Petersburg should be asked without delay to agree to the appointment of a Joint Commission for demarcating those frontiers on the spot. The Government of India had an apprehension that Russia's next objective would be Herat, and in view of past occurrences their fear seemed to be quite justified. It was generally belived that strategically, Herat was important for the safety of Afghanistan and India, and therefore, to check the Russian advance it was imperative to determine exactly the Russo-Afghan boundaries on that side. Great Britain had burdened herself with the responsibility of defending Afghanistan against unprovoked foreign aggression, and it was quite in the fitness of of things that the Government of India should request the Home Government to come to some understanding with St. Petersburg for the delimitation of Afghanistan's northern frontier, which was unspecified and had never been properly and accurately defined.

In the meantime, the Russian Press was publishing articles on the subject of recent annexation of Merv by Russia, and was dilating on the possible lines of boundary between Russia and Afghanistan. It pointed out that by occupying Quetta, and stretching her hands

17. *Foreign Dept. Progs* , Sec. E., May 1884, Nos 12-51, No.36.
18. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. E., May 1884, Nos 12-51, No. 40.
19. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. E., March 1884, Nos. 145-197, No. 194.

towards Kandahar, England had for ever buried the neutrality of Afghanistan, and there was no necessity for Russian statesmen to maintain the fiction of the neutral zone.[20] Therefore it was no wonder that, in spite af frequent advances, the Government of St. Petersburg regarded its position in *Turkestan as purely defensive.*

On its part the Government of India was prepared to fulfil its pledges towards Afghanistan, and at the same time reminded the Afghan ruler of his obligations towards India, and restrained him from any such activity as might lead to open conflict with Russia. In 1883 the Amir had moved his troops to Shighnan, which was the most important of the small States on the Upper Oxus, and included Roshan also The Viceroy informed Amir Abdur Rahman that his action in sending troops across the river Oxus had "elicited a remonstrance from the Russian Government", which appealed to the agreement of 1873 [21] Further, in view of the fact that the British Government was pledged to regard the Oxus as the northern boundary of Afghanistan, it would not be possible for the Government of India to come to Amir's assistance, because his troops had crossed that river in opposition to its wishes, and had broken the agreement of 1873.[22] The Government of India believed the agreement of 1873 as explicitly forbidding the Amir from crossing the Panja and Northern Panja, and as laying on that Government the obligation of remonstrating with him when he did cross the river.[23] The Afghan ruler was asked to avoid the danger of coming into collision with the Bokharan troops by ordering his forces to withdraw behind the river

Besides, the Indian Government also wrote that in the direction of Merv and Sarakhs the Amir had no definite frontier, and as the Russians and Persians were close to Afghanistan on that side, it was very desirable that his frontier from khoja Saleh to the Hari-Rud should be exactly and carefully laid down. [24] A demarcation of the Afghan frontiers was essential, in order that Russia might know the boundaries of Afghanistan, and avoid any encroachment

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20 *Foreign Dept. Progs* , Sec E , May 1884, Nos 52-78. No 63
21. *Foreign Dept Progs* , Sec. E., March 1884, Nos 145-197, No. 195.
22. *Ibid*
23 *Foreign Dept. Progs* , Sec, E , June 1884, Nos 377-95, K.W. No. I.
24. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec E.,March 1884, Nos 145-197., No.195

upon the frontiers of that Kingdom. The object of the British Government was to maintain the tranquillity of India, and the tranquillity of the countries on the borders of India, especially of Afghanistan, and therefore, the Amir was advised to withdraw his troops from the northern parts of Roshan and Shighnan to this side of the Oxus, and occupy the country east of the Hari-Rud.[25] This move was of great strategic and political importance. A good road connected Sarakhs to Herat through Badghis, and the Afghan control of Badghis was essential for the safety of Herat which was regarded as the key to the gate of India. Besides, the Government of India was responsible for Amir's foreign relations, and it was important that the Amir should act on the advice of that Government, as far as his external matters were concerned.

Moreover, the British were opposed to a policy which would provide St. Petersburg an excuse for making further territorial acquisitions in the direction of Afghanistan. Ins pite of these precautions on the part of Indo-British Government, the Russians were not sitting idle, and their agents and travellers were visiting places such as Panjdeh, Maimena, Toman Aga and Kafir Kalah in Afghanistan. This coupled with the advance of Russia towards the frontiers of Afghanistan, gave an increased importance to the question of the definition of the frontier line, which separated that State from the territories under Russian influence; and the British Government was prepared to accept the proposal put forward in 1882, and in 1884 repeated by M. de Giers, for the delimitation of the frontier of Afghanistan *from Khoja Saleh* westwards.[26] Sir E. Thornton, Her Majesty's Ambassador to St. Petersburg, was asked to inform M. de Giers of of this decision, and to add that the British Government was of the opinion that it would be desirable that the principal points of the boundary line should be laid down on the spot, and that a joint commission should be appointed for that purpose, and should commence operation next autumn.[27]

At the same time the British Foreign Office informed Thornton of the views of the Government of India on the subject of the Afghan frontier. The Indian Government contemplated the demarcation, in concert with the Russian authorities of the entire northern frontier

25. *Ibid.*
26. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. E., Aug. 1884, Nos. 74-110, No. 87.
27. *Ibid.*

of Afghanistan from the Hari-Rud to the borders of Kashgar[28]. Thornton was advised to postpone any formal proposal in this regard, if he thought that there was any probability of the Russian Government objecting to the delimitation of the boundary to the east of Khoja Saleh, until the Joint Commission had commenced its labours on the western portion[29] The British Ambassador met M. de Giers on 5 May 1884, and informed him of the acceptance of Russian proposal for the demarcation of the frontier of Afghanistan from Khoja Saleh westwards Thornton also asked the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, whether he did not think it advisable that the same Commission, which was to be appointed to lay down that boundary, should continue a similar work eastward even as far as Kashgaria, because that portion of the region was as little known and the boundary as ill-defined as the other[30] M de Giers also believed that such a demarcation was desirable, and told Thornton that he would think over the subject before deciding upon it[31]

Shortly after, Thornton, in his despatch of 17 May 1884, conveyed Russian Foreign Minister's reply to Granville, regarding the delimitation of Afghanistan's boundary from Khoja Saleh to the Tejen. M. de Giers had stated that his Government was well disposed to name a Commissioner, who should visit in concert with a British colleague the regions in question and should seek jointly with him the elements of a line of frontier which might satisfy the respective interests of the two powers[32] At the same time the Russian Government objected to the appointment of an Afghan Commissioner, and wanted that the Afghan representative should be appointed in the capacity of an expert, who could give local information when asked for it by the Commission.[33] The Government of St. Petersburg showed keenness for the delimitation of the frontier because the Russians were in search of a stable limit for the territories under their possession, and wanted to determine their south-western frontiers. Her Majesty's Government concurred in the views set forth by M. de Giers as to the constitution of the Commission, and Thornton was

28 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. E., June 1884, Nos 377-95, No. 387.
29 *Ibid.*
30 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. E, June 1884, Nos 396-416, No 410
31. *Ibid*
32. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec E, July 1884, Nos. 186-219, No 194.
33. *Ibid*

asked to propose to him that the Commissioners would meet on 1 October 1884, at Sarakhs on the left bank of the Hari-Rud.[34]

Meanwhile, Persia was getting alarmed at Russian occupation of Old Sarakhs. The Persian Government, having received detailed information of the occupation of Old Sarakhs lands, and ejection of of Persians by Russian troops, had addressed further remonstrances to the Russian Minister at Teheran, who stated that his Government could not recognise the claim of Persia to any territory on the right bank of the river.[35] The Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs reasserted Persia's claim to the entire district on the basis that, before the new fort was built, only one Sarakhs, the district on the right bank of the river, was known; that it was recognised by all as Persian territory, and that Persia's claim to that district had never till then been questioned, even by the Turkomans.[36] The Russian contention that the district belonged to Merv Turkomans, could not be accepted in face of the fact that the Turkomans twice, within a short period of time, had applied to Persia for permission to settle there, which was refused. Besides, the late Russian *Charge d' Affaires* had promised that the territorial claim should be investigaed, which had not been done.[37]

The Government of India thought it desirable that the Persian remonstrance should be supported, so that the matter should at least be left for investigation by the Boundary Commission. Besides, the "retention of Old Sarakhs district by Persia would interrupt direct communications between Akhal and Herat territory, and conjoined with Afghan occupation of Panjdeh, it would prevent Russian occupation of any part of Hari-Rud valley."[38] Morever, New Sarakhs depended on Old Sarakhs district for supplies and was useless by itself, so the Persian claim to Old Sarakhs seemed quite justified. But unfortunately the British Government could not make a stand for the retention of Sarakhs in Persian hands. Had Sarakhs remained in Persian hands, it would have acted as a buffer between the Russians and Afghans on the Hari-Rud.

Meanwhile, as far as the activities of the Anglo-Russian

34. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. E , July 1884, Nos. 186-219, No. 207.
35. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. E., June 1884, Nos. 358-76, No. 375.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Foreign Dept. Progs* , Sec., E., June 1884, Nos. 358-76. No. 376

Boundary Commission were concerned, Amir's attitude had not been very encouraging in permitting the Indian contingent to proceed to the appointed meeting place via Afghanistan Therefore, on 22 July 1884, the Government of India sent a paper to General Amir Ahmad Khan, Amir's Agent in India, which explained to him that Sir Peter Lumsden had been appointed to represent the British Government and that he would travel to the Afghan frontier by way of Persia.[39] He was further informed that Lumsden would meet the Russian Commissioner near Sarakhs on or about 15 October, and the British and Russian representatives would there await the arrival of the party from India.

Her Majesty's Government was of the opinion that Lumsden could not begin the work of the Commission until he was joined by the party of officers and escort from India, who were acquainted with the affairs of Afghanistan. The Indian Government made it explicit that the delay was likely to prove prejudicial to the interests of Afghanistan It was even possible that, unless advantage was taken of the favourable opportunity, the demarcation scheme might fall through altogether Therefore, Amir's Agent was requested to write to his master, and obtain from him a clear expression of his views He was also to inform the Amir that as delay had occurred, it was not possible to arrive at the frontier in time, except by taking the shortest route. Lord Ripon felt that it was not necessary that the party should enter Kandahar, if the Afghan ruler thought it undesirable, but they should march by way of Girishk, or they could not be in time for work that year, and in that case he would not be responsible for the consequences.[40]

It seems that the Russians, on their part, were not really keen to hasten the work of the Boundary Commission. They resorted to delaying tactics, perhaps in order to gain time for making further territorial acquisitions and presenting the Indo-British Government with a *fait accompli*, which it would not be easy to reverse. Firstly, there was a controversy about fixing the starting point from where the Commission was to start its work. M. de Giers wanted that the demarcation of the frontier should begin at Khoja Saleh. But the British Government could not agree to this proposal, because owing

39. *Foreign Dept Progs.*, Sec., E, July 1884, Nos 186-219, No 209.
40 *Ibid.*

to the distance which the Commission would have to travel before arriving at Khoja Saleh and the severity of the winter season, the arrangement would be tantamount to postponing the commencement of operations until next year.[41] Besides, they thought that there was no pressing need of tracing the boundary of Khoja Seleh, as it was already fixed by the agreement of 1872-73 between the two Governments. On the other hand, the annexation of Merv had caused much anxiety in Afghanistan with regard to the portion of the frontier between the Murghab and the Hari-Rud, and the only way to allay that anxiety was by a definite settlement of the points where the boundary touched those two rivers.

Secondly, M. de Giers expressed his disappointment that the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had not laid down any principles on which instructions for the Commissioners should be framed, and whether those principles should be ethnographical, topographical or geographical, or all three.[42] According to Thornton, M. de Giers' opinion seemed to be that all the Turkoman tribes should be excluded from Afghanistan, in the hope that they would ultimately give their allegiance to Russia.[43] The British Ambassador surmised that on that ground efforts would no doubt be made to place Panjdeh outside Afghanistan. However, when the discussion of these technical points of difference was going on, M. de Giers told Thornton confidentially that General Zelenoi had been accepted as the Russian Commissioner by the Czar as well as the Minister of War, but that it was not known whether the General would accept the appointment.[44]

On 30 July 1884, M. de Giers informed Thornton that the Czar was inclined to assent to the proposal that the Commission should begin its labours from a point on the Hari-Rud.[45] But the Czar's assent was conditional on the two Governments previously coming to an agreement as to the point from which the line of boundary should start, and as to the principles upon which the instructions for the guidance of the Commission should be framed.[46] This prompted the

41. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., Sept. 1884, Nos. 59-61, No. 61.
42. *Foreign Dept. Progs*,, Sec. F , Sept. 1884, Nos. 449-60, No. 455.
43. *Ibid.*
44. *Ibid.*
45. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F , Sept. 1884, Nos. 449-60,No. 458.
46. *Ibid.*

British Government to "inform the Russian Government that, up to the present time, Her Majesty's Government have considered Afghan territory to extend to a point on the Hari-Rud in the neighbourhood of Sarakhs, but they think it undesirable that any attempt should be made to arrive at any precise understanding beforehand, on a matter which it is one of the objects of the Commission to investigate "[47] The British Government further held the view that "the primary duty of the Commission will be to ascertain the true limits of Afghan territory, and they must therefore be guided in defining the Amir's jurisdiction by the political relations of the tribes occupying the country, but whilst recognizing all legitimate rights of the Amir, the Commission should bear in mind the importance, in order to reduce to a minimum the risk of future complications of not imposing upon him obligations which he would be unwilling to assume, or could not in parctice fulfil."[48] On 25 August 1884, Granville sent instructions to Sir Peter Lumsden on the basis of these principles, and the Commissioner was given to understand in clear terms, that the object of the present negotiations was to reach a lasting and satisfactory arrangement on the whole question, so that the Amir might be assigned a good working frontier

It was on 26 August 1884, that Amir Abdur Rahman informed the British Commissioner that he had appointed Kazi Sad-ud-din Khan, as his representative, who had been charged with the duties of hospitality to the British officers, and of speaking, according to his directions, at the time of discussion, regarding the settlement of Afghanistan's frontier, with the Russian Government; and informing him if anything else happened, and asking for a reply; and acting in consultation with the local Governors. [49] In ordinary matters Kazi Sad-ud-din was to consider the advice of the members of the Commission as Amir's will, but in important questions he was to seek an answer from the Amir and speak accordingly.

On their part, the Russians were advancing all possible excuses causing delay in the commencement of Boundary Commission's operations The British Government received the information that according to Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Russian

47 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F., Sept. 1884, Nos 449-60, No. 460
48 *Ibid*
49 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F., Dec. 1884, Nos 48-127, No 68

Commissioner would not be able to meet his British colleague on 7 November 1884, because his preparations would not be complete till December. Therefore, it was proposed by M. de Giers that the Commissioners should meet on 27 January 1885. Besides, the Government of St Petersburg considered Sarakhs objectionable as a place of meeting, and suggested that some other place such as Pul-i-Khatun should be selected; and they also urged that the two escorts should be reduced as much as possible on account of difficulty of obtaining supplies. The British informed the Czar's Government that it was too late to make any change in the arrangements for the Commissioner's escort, which consisted only of 200 cavalry and 200 infantry, and was already on its way to the Helmund. With regard to meeting place, the British Government could not accept any other place, because the Russian Government had formally agreed to Sarakhs.[50] Since the British Commissioner had left Teheran for Meshed, it was earnestly hoped that the Government of St. Petersburg would adhere to the agreement come to between the two Governments, and would instruct their Commissioner to reach Sarakhs in time to commence operations before the winter.[51]

On 13 October 1884, M Zinovieff, the head of the Asiatic Department in the Russian Foreign Office, and General Zelenoi, the Russian Commissioner designate called upon the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg.[52] When asked as to the cause of delay on the part of Russian Commissioner, General Zelenoi replied that when he learnt of his appointment he was at Fraezensbad, where he had gone on account of his health. In British circles it was thought that his illness was more diplomatic than real. However, the General further informed that after his recovery, he had to go to Tiflis for arranging the business of the office which he held there, and that it was only within the last few days that he had been able to come to St. Petersburg, for gaining information with regard to the service in which he was to be engaged, and to receive his instructions. He also stated he would be obliged to return to Tiflis for certain information which he expected to gather there, and that he would then proceed to Ashkabad to make his final preparations. He added that his health

50. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Dec, 1884, Nos 322-78, No. 370.
51. *Ibid*
52 *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Dec. 1884, Nos. 322-78, No. 329.

was still not good and it would be impossible for him to meet the British Commissioner till January next.

Later on, Zelenoi declared that as he had accepted the appointment, he was most anxious that the labours of the Commission should be successful, but he feared that they might end in failure because the Commission had no basis to go upon.[53] He thought that there were no salient points marked out for their guidance, or a general line indicated, on which the Commission was to work out the details of the boundary. Therefore, he regarded it advisable that a certain zone should be agreed upon between the two Governments, and within that zone the Commissioners should be instructed to consider where the north-western frontier of Afghanistan might lie, and outside that the Commission should not be allowed to extend their activities.

In spite of Thornton's reply, that it was for the Commission to decided as to what should be the theatre of their operations, and that it seemed quite improbable that the British Government would agree to limit the action of their Commissioner by prescribing the extent of territory, outside of which he was not to carry out his explorations and inquiries, the Russian Commissioner insisted upon the expediency of an agreement between the two Governments by fixing the zone, in which the Commission was to have full power to carry out their investigations.[54] General Zelenoi was giving vent to vague fears and putting forth these proposals, in spite of the fact that he had been assured of fullest and friendliest cooperation from the side of the Amir and the British The Russian General was causing delay making one excuse after another for the same, while his Government successfully utilised the interval by occupying different coveted points. The Government of St. Petersburg was also trying to put pressure on the frontier tribes with the idea of alienating them from their allegiance to the Amir, and Lumsden thought that every hour of delay was likely to increase the difficulties of a satisfactory solution.[55]

However, in reply to a further communication from the British Government, Thornton received a memorandum from the Russian

53. *Ibid.*
54 *Ibid*
55. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Dec. 1884, Nos. 322-78. No. 326.

Government on 21 October 1884, in which it was repeated that Zelenoi could not join Lumsden before 27 January next. It also added that the strength of Russian escort would be on a par with that of the British. It further agreed to Sarakhs being the place of meeting, but expressed the opinion that it would not be expedient for the English escort to traverse the territory occupied by the Salor Turkomans on the right bank of the Hari-Rud. Besides, it also urged that the duties of the Commissioners for the demarcation of the boundaries should be laid down with great care and precision, and the extent of the territory which should be the object of their investigations should be defined.

Meanwhile, the Russian Cossacks were advancing to Pul-i-Khatun, while the Afghans understood that Sarakhs was the point agreed upon beyond which the Russian influence was not to penetrate.[56] Any sudden encroachment of territory, therefore, was likely to cause excitement among the neighbouring population, as well as in Afghanistan, India and Britain, especially at a moment when it was hoped that an amicable settlement was on the point of being arrived at between the Governments of England and Russia. But the Afghans themselves were responsible for this action on the part of Russia. Had the Afghans not occupied Panjdeh in June 1884, perhaps the Russians would not have made any further encroachment of territory. To Lumsden Russian action seemed to be a distinct infringement of the agreement of 1873, and later on it transpired that General Komaroff, Governor of the Trans-Caspian province, had received his instructions for holding new position from Prince Dondoukoff Korsakoff.[57] Komaroff endeavoured to prove that it was nothing unusual; it was customary to station such outposts. Besides he denied that any Russians, except Dr. Regel, a botanist, had gone further south than Pul-i-Khatun, though admitted at the same time that a survey party had started for Yulatan with instructions not to go further than the Kushk.[58] Moreover, the Russians had lately been investigating the water supplies of the Khombow Road, though they denied it on the basis that Armenians had probably been mistaken for the Russians However, the repeated journeys of Russian exploring

56. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., Dec 1884, Nos. 322-78, No. 372.

57. *Ibid.*

58. *Ibid.*

parties southward produced alarm in many minds In the meantime the Afghans were trying to frustrate the Russian design of occupying as much portion of the disputed area as possible, and therefore, early in October 1884, they occupied Ak Tapa, on the bank of the Murghab, some few miles in advance of Panjdeh; and about the middle of that month pushed on an outpost to Sari Yazi, some 24 miles north of Panjdeh.[59] In order to assure the Amir once again, that the Indian Government was willing to fulfil its obligations towards Afghanistan, the Viceroy informed him, in a letter of 20 October 1884, that the British Mission would do all in its power to secure his just rights, and lay down a frontier which might prevent future conflict and cause of dispute.[60]

Meanwhile, at an important Crown Meeting held in St. Petersburg on 24 December 1884, the decision was taken that the frontier line must be traced at 110 kilometers from Herat, in order to include Panjdeh and Zulfikar Pass, and the Russian troops were to hold this line after occupyin it, but were not to make any further advance[61] The Russian occupation of Zulfikar Pass had stirred a new wave of fear and excitement in England and Afghanistan, and the British believed that their adversary in Central Asia was advacing on Herat But once again, in the middle of March 1885, the Government of St. Petersburg assured the British Government that the Russians had no hostile designs towards Afghanistan, but were desirous of maintaining friendly relations with Great Britain, and the best way of realising that aim was to establish a good boundary line between the spheres of influence of the two powers.

However, Her Majesty's Government asked the Russians to withdraw their advance posts from Sari Yazi and Zulfikar.[62] But the Russians declined to withdraw and informed that their officers had been ordered to be careful in avoiding conflicts with the Afghans and the complications should be feared only if the Afghans attacked them The British, in order not to give any excuse to Russia for further advance, asked Sir Peter Lumsden to "press the Afghans strongly not to advance," and at the same time they wanted the Indian Government to inform and advise the Amir accordingly.[63]

59 *Foreign Dept Progs, Sec, F, July 1885*, Nos 380-4, No 381.
60 *Ibid*
61 Rostovsky, *op cit*, 178-9.
62 *Foreign Dept Progs* Sec F, June 1885, Nos 518-74, Nos 549-50.
63 *Ibid*

On 4 March 1885, the Government of Great Britain asked their Commissioner to make a communication to Amirs' representative, advising him that the Afghans should follow the policy of maintaining *status quo*, pending negotiations which were then proceeding with the Government of St. Petersburg.[64] Besides, Lumsden was advised to remain in Afghanistan, where his presence might stop further Russian advance and prevent hostilities. Further, it was also arranged that the Viceroy should meet Amir Abdur Rahman about the end of March, and discuss all these matters.

In spite of Anglo-Afghan attempts to check Russia's advance, the Government of St. Petersburg was bent upon appropriating Panjdeh a fertile tract which was considered as lying within the Afghan sphere. Panjdeh had actually been occupied by the Afghans in the summer of 1884, and in December 1884, the Russian Government had been informed that Her Majesty's Government did not agree with them that Pul-i-Khatun and Panjdeh were outside the limits of Afghanistan, but considered that those questions must be settled by the Commissioners on the spot.[65] Again in March 1885, the British Government refused to be a party to any understanding by which Panjdeh or other districts, claimed as Afghan soil, should without inquiry on the spot, be excluded from Afghanistan.[66] At this time in March 1885 the Russians made it very clear that it was the invasion of Panjdeh by the Afghans, and not General Zelenoi's delay which prevented the negotiations from following their natural course.[67] Therefore the Russians continued their aggressive intentions, and on 30 March 1885, they defeated the Afghan force, which was driven out of Panjdeh with a loss of 500 lives It was believed by General Sir D.M. Stewart that Captain Yate "displayed lack of judgement and foresight by encouraging the Afghans to hold a faulty military position apparently on the ground that they had a right to occupy that position." Captain Yate contended that the Afghan troops had not made any advance since 14 March and the Afghans were entitled to hold positions on the left bank of the Kushk because it was not an

64 *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F , June 1885, Nos. 518-74, No. 573.

65. *Foreign Dept. Progs* , Sec. F , July 1885, Nos. 380-84, No. 381.

66. *Ibid.*

67. *P.P., Central Asia* No. 2 (1885) (C. 4387) Inclosure in No. 267, 15 March, 1885.

advance but merely an extension of their position.[68] It conclusively proves that Captain Yate had encouraged the Afghans to occupy positions which they should not have and had advised them to maintain a bad military position in defiance of General Komaroff's demand which was backed by an overwhelming force. The international situation became tense, and the two great empires appeared on the verge of an armed conflict all over the world. Gladstone asked the House of Commons for a vote of credit of £ 11,000,000 to meet the Russian aggression in case of need.

The war clouds hung low because of the alleged aggressiveness of Russian policy which produced the Panjdeh incident in March 1885, and necessitated serious preparations on the part of Anglo-Indian Governments for a grave struggle, but the two belligerents were rather reluctant to come to grips. Therefore the clouds passed away. A war between England and Russia would have considerably weakened the two Powers, and made Germany all powerful. Besides, due to her entanglements in Sudan and her interests in India, Great Britain wisely refrained from involving herself in a ruinous war by setting a spark to all the batteries in Europe and Asia Panjdeh was a small place where the Afghan hold was not really strong, and there their authority stood disputed and challenged [69] No doubt, Colonel Stewart and Peter Lumsden had repeatedly written, between 1883 and 1885, that Panjdeh belonged to Afghanistan,[70] perhaps because it suited the British to declare Panjdeh as Afghan, to prevent Russia claiming authority over it. Therefore, when in April 1884, Russian Agents had visited Panjdeh and Maimena, Her Majesty's Government had remonstrated.[71] But at the same time in 1885 they could do nothing to save Panjdeh from being crushed under the Russian steam-roller, because they themselves had precipitated the crisis as mentioned above and because Abdur Rahman was not prepared to permit any British soldier to set foot on Afghan soil. Amir's policy was to isolate Afghanistan, as far as possible, from any foreign influence, and therefore, while he was willing to accept money and material

68 *Dufferin Papers*, Correspondence in India, Vol. I, April 1885 to June 1885, No. 288, 5 May 1885

69 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Aug, 1887, Nos. 390-406, No 395, Appendix IV,

70. *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F., July 1885 Nos 380-84, No. 381.

71 *Ibid*

from the Indo-British Government, he was unwilling to allow their army to enter his country. But had he requested the Government of India to despatch their armies for his assistance, it would have not been possible for them to come to his aid in time due to long distance, rugged nature of the country, lack of proper and rapid means of transport and communication At this time *The Statesman and Friend of India* published a letter which said that it was not possible for the British to go to war with Russia even if they were in a position to do so, because Russia was not open to British attack either in Europe or Asia The futility of sending a fleet to the Baltic was demonstrated in the Crimean War, and as Turkey would not be a party to this war, British fleet would not obtain an entrance to the Black Sea In Asia, Russia was more completely beyond the reach of the British than in Europe, and the British would not be able to advance beyond Herat. But in getting there the British would destroy for ever the policy of a strong, friendly, and independent Afghanistan.[72] All these factors prompted the British Government to consider discretion as the better part of valour and propose arbitration to Russia.

However, at the time of the Panjdeh incident the Amir had come to meet the Viceroy at Rawalpindi There the Afghan ruler said that as the British Government had declared that it would assist him in repelling any foreign enemy, so it was right and proper that Afghanistan should unite in the firmest manner and stand side by side with that Government[73] Abdur Rahman was fully conscious of his obligations and loyalty to the British; and he took the Panjdeh incident with unexpected serenity But later on he felt that the English had let him down in case of Panjdeh.[74] Therefore, before leaving India he showed some appearance of warmth and indignation about the Panjdeh outrage, and talked about taking retaliatory measures against Russia[75]

The Government of India impressed upon him the necessity of not complicating the situation, and asked him to act in concert with them.[76] Finally, the Amir accepted that he was bound by his agree-

72. *The Statesman and Friend of India*, Friday, April 10, 1885.
73. *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, July 1885, Nos. 125-207, No 133
74. Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan, *op cit.*, 243-6
75. *Foreign Dept, Progs.*, Sec. F., July 1885 Nos. 125-207, K.W. III.
76. *Ibid.*

ment with the British Government not to deal directly with any Foreign Power, but only in concert with them [77] He promised to remain calm in view of the negotiations that were then going on between England and Russia, and hoped that the talks would be successful There is nothing to prove that the Amir himself decided that Panjdeh was not worth fighting for. Had the Amir done so he would not have talked about taking retaliatory measures against Russia On the basis of above mentioned facts it can be safely concluded that the Government of India forced the Amir to acquiesce in the Russian annexation of Panjdeh, and ultimately the Afghan ruler decided to give up the valley. Therefore the impression conveyed by Colonel West Ridgeway to Marquis of Salisbury was not correct [78] And even if the Amir showed indifference it was because of his keenness to save Afghanistan from being a theatre of war of the two Imperialist Powers

Before the Panjdeh outrage, Lumsden had written to his Government that the loss of Panjdeh would be an indelible blot on their prestige in Asia, and that the abandonment of that place and of the position of Ak-Tapa would give up the key of Herat defensive line and be fatal mistake [79] British public opinion favoured a firm policy against Russia *The Englishman* considered the agreement with Russia on the Afghan boundary as a base surrender of Afghan interests to Russian hectoring [80] *The Hindoo Patriot* described the Panjdeh affair as an unfortunate surrender which not only destroyed England's prestige, but also lowered her position among the great Powers of Europe [81] But *The Statesman and Friend* of India came to the conclusion that England was distinctly in the wrong in denouncing Russia's conduct. "It was the Afghans, not the Russians who seized the land, their title to which was in dispute. It was England, and not Russia, who was the aggressor, ..."[82] But, in spite of a strong public opinion in favour of a war, Gladstone Cabinet was in no mood to make this trivial incident a *casus belli*, and started negotiations with their adversary. This was in keeping with the spirit of a section of the Vernacular Press which was very much against war The Bengali weeklies like the *Shomprokash*, the *Suravi*,

77. *Ibid*
78 *P P , Central Asia, No 1* (1888) (C 5254), No 1, P 8.
79 *Foreign Dept Progs* , S•c F , July 1885, Nos 380-84, No. 381.
80 *The Englishman*, Friday, April 10, 1885
81 *The Statesman and Friend of India*, Sunday, April 19, 1885.
82 *The Stateman and Friend of India*, Sunday, April, 19, 1885.

the *Nababibhakar* appreciated the realities of the situation, and the Russian position in Central Asia in a better manner, and hoped that the war would be averted.[83] Russians, on their part, were also not eager to precipitate a war with Great Britain in Central Asia. At this time, they were keen to maintain their authority in the Balkans, as the happenings there were proving detrimental to the advancement of their interests. The Government of St Petersburg was anxious to maintain Russian influence in Bulgaria, and the storm brewing there made it eager to safeguard its position in that area. Regarding the Russian role in Bulgarian drama, Kimberley wrote that "I shall not be sorry to see Russia's hands fully occupied in that quarter. It will tend to diminish her pressure in Central Asia."[84] In view of these developments nearer at home the Russians could not dare risk a war with the British in Asia.

Therefore, the Anglo-Russian negotiations for the settlement of Afghanistan's disputed boundary were resumed, and a preliminary agreement was arrived at. The two Powers agreed to neut ralize the disputed area till the completion of the negotiations. Later on it was followed by the final delimitation of the frontier in the Panjdeh region, and a protocol was signed on 10 September 1885, according to which Russians received the Panjdeh district,but the Zulfikar Pass-a very important strategical position, which they had claimed, went to Afghanistan. Amir attached much value to Zulfikar Pass as it commanded the road to Gulran, and was necessary for the defenceof the northern frontier of Afghanistan

In the meantime the Government of India, who thought that Russia's next objective would be Herat, advised the Amir to fortify that place properly. The British held the view that Herat was the key to the gate of India as the easiest road to India lay through that place, and its fall would endanger the very existence of Afghanistan as an independent nation. St. Petersburg was still pursuing the delaying tactics, and it was considered essential that the Amir should complete the work of fortifying and garrisoning Herat as early as possible Since the Amir had some objection to British officers entering Herat and inspecting the progress of work, Her Majesty's Government made it clear to him that unless Herat was fully provisioned before the end of October, and garrisoned by a

83. Translations given in *The Englishman*, Monday, April 13, 1885
84. *Dufferin Papers*, Correspondence in England Jan. 1886 to Dec. 1886, No. 182, Sept. 9, 1886.

sufficient force of trustworthy men, and protected by strong fortifications carried out under the direction of British engineers, it would be difficult for them to retain confidence in Amir's ability to appreciate the demands of the situation [85] They would be compelled to consider whether the Afghan ruler's actions had been such as to let the agreement of 20 July 1880, to be effectually maintained. [86] This grave warning was meant to have from Abdur Rahman, as soon as possible, the formal undertaking which the British Government desired But the Amir thought that Ridgeway's entry in Herat would be tantamount to British interference in his internal affairs, and he informed Lord Dufferin that the origin and continuance of the Indo-Afghan friendship consisted in the fact that the British Government would not interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs, and therefore, the Viceroy should weigh and consider Ridgeway's idea of proceeding to Herat [87] However, with regard to the provisioning and garrisoning of Herat, Abdur Rahman gave full satisfaction and assurance to the Anglo-Indian Government [88] Later on, he accorded a satisfactory reception to the British Commissioner, at Herat The British Government gave all possible assistance in money and material, and also decided that any Russian advance towards Herat would be treated as a *casus belli* Thus a dangerous corner in the history of Indo-Afghan relations was turned, and the ties once again became strong

Russians, having achieved their object of occupying Panjdeh, appointed Colonel Khulberg as their Commissioner for further delimitation of the Russo-Afghan boundary. The Russian Commissioner met his British counter-part at Zulfikar on 10 November 1885, which was the date fixed in the protocol signed at London on 10 September [89] To the Indian and Afghan Governments the delimitation of Afghanistan's north-western frontier seemed to be a measure calculated to stop the advance of Russia for a time more effectively than leaving the Afghan frontier undefined, and therefore, with the arrival of the Russian Commissioner the work of further demarcation proceeded ahead Finally, the Anglo-Russian Boundary Commis-

85 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Jan 1886, Nos 315-25, No 315.
86 *Ibid*
87 *Foreign Dept Progs* Sec F., Jan. 1886, Nos. 315-25, No. 316
88 *Ibid*
89 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Sept, 1886, Nos I-88, No. 7

sion successfully concluded the work of delimitation, and a protocol was signed on 22 July 1887, at St. Petersburg.

Thus Afghanistan's north-western frontier question was settled with the conclusion of these negotiations The advantage gained by the Amir, with the conclusion of this formal agreement with Russia, lay in the fact that he had secured a definite frontier from the Hari-Rud to the Oxus Former condition against reopening canals below Chihil Dukter remained in force, but Afghan colonists in Karatapa were allowed exclusive use of the Maghor river.[90] Further, by restoring to the Sariks, lands which were for a long time cultivated by them or covered by their flocks, the district of Kham-i-ab had been preserved to Afghanistan.[91] Thus the British succeeded in making the Russians accept a boundary line which in the future could be transgressed by an open violation of the Convention of July 1887. Now the Russians were bound by an international compact, and they could not flout it by making any advance into Afghanistan because the British would have treated it as a *casus belli*, and also because it would have created international complications. The Government of St. Petersburg was not prepared to incur the odium of acting contrary to the formal agreement, and therefore, Afghanistan's north-western frontier became safe from any further encroachments.

In the ultimate analysis we find that, upto 1887, the Indo-Afghan relations were quite cordial and smooth. The Indian and British Governments had steadfastly followed the policy of maintaining united Afghanistan. They zealously looked after Amir's foreign affairs, and tried to settle the complicated external matters, as much in his favour as possible. The Indian Government was always willing to aid him with money and arms, and it did actually assist him when a Russian attack on Herat seemed imminent. The alacrity with which it came forward and undertook the arduous task of delimiting Afghanistan's north-western frontier in conjunction with Russia; its war preparations at the time of Panjdeh crisis; its anxiety for the fortification and garrisoning of Herat; its forcing Yakub Khan to surrender, are all instances of its efforts for the fruition of the policy of a united, strong and friendly power on India's north-west frontier.

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90. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Aug. 1887, Nos. 33-46, No. 40.
91. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Aug. 1887, Nos. 33-46, No. 41.

In keeping with the sentiments and feelings of Abdur Rahman, the Government of India abstained from any interference in the internal affairs of the friendly and protected neighbour, which led to better relations and closer ties, and both the parties stuck firmly to their obligations But these good relations could not continue for long, because the Russian expansion elsewhere in Asia prompted the Government of India to adopt a forward policy once again. This drastic step to counter-act the Russian designs created distrust amongst the Afghans, and the Indo-Afghan relations became strained for quite some time.

3

CONFLICTING IMPERIALISMS 1888-1895

With the completion of territorial expansion in the Amur region and Central Asia, Russia reached its so called natural limits in almost all the directions The achievement of this task inaugurated a new era in Russian history when the policy of colonial imperialism gave place to that of economic imperialism. The underlying cause for the change in the main aspects of Russian imperialism in Asia during this period was rapid economic development.[1] From now onwards the two important factors, which influenced and governed the policy of St. Petersburg, were the quest for markets and an ice-free port for the naval base. The Northern Power had firmly established its authority in the Turkoman territory, and it fortified its hold by means of the Central Asian railway. The construction of railways made easier the economic exploitation of Persia and Central Asia. Further, being checked in its advance towards Afghanistan's frontier, Russia thought that the line of least resistance lay in the Far East, and, therefore, it increased its pace of penetration into China. These activities of the Government of St. Petersburg presented a challenge to the commercial supremacy of Great Britain in those regions, and the British could not view the designs of their potential rival with indifference, and without making proper counter-moves. Thus the

1. Rostovsky, *op. cit.*, 196,

Anglo-Russian hostility was accentuated by the developments in Persia, the Pamirs, and the Far East

However, in making an assessment of the international situation we find that there were many factors which prompted the Russian expansion outside Europe, and which in turn brought them into conflict with Great Britain and aggravated Anglo-Russian antagonism The Government of St Petersburg was trying to expand Russian influence in the Balkans, but other Powers were not prepared to give them a free hand Austrian and Russian interests in the Balkans seemed irreconcilable, and the events in Bulgaria ultimately strained them to the breaking point Czar Alexander III, regarded Bulgaria as a vassal of Russia and expected that Alexander of Battenberg would respect his advice, but neither the Prince nor his counsellors were prepared to accept Russia's dictation By a *coup d'etat* the province of Rumelia was united with Bulgaria without Russia's prior consultation. The upshot of this affair was that the Czar supported a palace revolution in Bulgaria, in 1886, to unseat Alexander of Battenberg The Bulgarians were still not disposed to consult Russia, and chose Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg as their new ruler The Czar wanted to solve the problem in his own way He declared that Ferdinand must withdraw and let Bulgaria freely choose a ruler, and he would then not interfere in her affairs Austria and her friends refused to agree to the eviction of Ferdinand, but France and Germany supported the Czar's plan[2] Kalnoky's determination to oppose Russian dictation in Bulgaria had been strengthened by the conditional promise of British assistance, and therefore, Bismarck's declaration that he would not consider an Austro-Russian struggle over Bulgaria as a *casus belli* could not deter Kalnoky from adopting a firm atittude towards Russia. Turkey on her part declared the Prince's title illegal and Bulgaria acknowledged Turkey's communication [3] But Turkey and Russia did not take steps to enforce it, and thus, the three years' crisis came to an end with the confessed defeat of St Peterburg.[4]

This subsidence of their influence in the Balkans encouraged the Russians to intensify their political as well as economic drive in Central Asia, and to pursue their ambitions in the Far East. It ful-

2. G P Gooch, *History of Modern Europe*, 1878-1919 (Delhi, 1954) 128
3 *Ibid*, 129
4 *Ibid*

filled their need for a new area of concentration. It also offered them an opportunity of enhancing their influence outside Europe, and challenging the supremacy of their potential rival in Asia. Besides, some important developments took place in Russia itself during the second half of the nineteenth century, which intensified its aggressiveness. [5] The emancipation of serfs in 1861, and the rise of heavy industries about 1885, contributed to its very rapid transformation from an agricultural country to a modern capitalist and industrial state.[6] This change brought in its wake acute land and labour problems, which finally resulted in revolutionary activities by discontented people. In order to cope with these difficulties the Russian Government followed a strictly reactionary policy, and to divert the attention of the people it offered stimulus to economic development and public works. This increased industrial output made it imperative to seek new markets for raw materials and finished goods, and in this situation started economic penetration into Asia where foreign competition was not very keen. Russia's economic and political penetration became particularly marked in Persia and China during this period.

However, it cannot be denied that this changing phase of imperialism was initiated by Germany on a large scale. In 1888, "Constantinople was linked up with Central Europe" through German efforts and with that the scheme of a trunk line through Asia Minor began to take a virtual shape. The Germans had thought of establishing their influence in Asiatic Turkey, and they seized the opportunity when, as a return for a loan, a group of mainly German financiers, headed by the Deutsche Bank, obtained a concession for ninety-nine years for administering a line previously constructed by a British Company covering fifty-seven miles from Haidar Pasha to Ismid; and for continuing it to Angora. [7] They also received a "substantial kilometeric guarantee and preferential right of extension," and ultimately they reached Angora in 1892. A further concession was granted in 1893, which enabled them to reach Konia in 1896. In the Far East also Germany started the policy of "grab and take," which Russia followed soon after. The policy of peaceful economic penetration initiated by Germany and followed by Russia, aggravated Anglo-Russian antagonism in these regions of Asia.

5. Rostovsky, *op. cit.*, 195.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Gooch, *op. cit.*, 219.

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century Russia increased the pace of her economic and political penetration into Persia Russian activity in Northern Persia impelled the British to intensify their drive in the Southern portion of that country. By the Treaty of Turkmanchai, signed in 1828, Russia had obtained from Persia the Khanat of Erivan, on either side of the Araxes, and the Khanat of Nachktchivan [8] The Shah had also to pay an indemnity of thirty millions of silver roubles and acknowledge Russia's right to maintain a navy in the Caspian Sea Besides, a later annexe to the treaty secured for St Petersburg special economic and tariff rights According to Article three of this separate compact, five percent was agreed upon as the customs charges on exports and imports; and according to Article six, the Russian officers were permitted to import goods intended for their personal use free of charge. [9] The extra-territorial privileges it gave to Russia had to be extended to other European Powers, and this treaty formed the basis of future relations of all the western powers with Persia [10]

Henceforth, Persia had to bear the brunt of conflicting interests of St Petersburg and Great Britain Russia's conterminous frontier coupled with the weakness of Persia gave the former an opportunity to bring into active operation its "political and economic pressure"; and during the nineteenth century the rivalry between Great Britain and Russia at Teheran was quite evident.[11] The Government of Russia had embarked on a career of political expansion and economic exploitation of Asia, and it also had some intention of obtaining an ice-free port on the Persian Gulf Her Majesty's Government was spurred to action with the intention of preventing a blow to their sphere of influence and commerce, and was confronted with the necessity of controlling the Persian Gulf and all other areas adjacent to their empire in India The achievement of their respective objectives became an important motive of the two European Powers, and brought about the inevitable conflict of interests in this part of Asia

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8 Aitchison, XII, *op cit*, Appendix VI - Persia, XVI - XVII, Article III.

9 *Ibid*, Annexe to Appendix VI - Persia, XXIX - XXX, Articles III and VI.

10 Sykes, *Persia*, II, *op cit*, 320

11 Gooch, *op cit*, 311.

The construction of railways was an important factor in the fast developing Russia's economic progress and penetration Including Turkestan, it had a common frontier with Persia of some two thousand miles, and the construction of the Trans-Caspian Railway along this frontier brought the province of Khorasan within the reach of Russian trade. [12] The economic value of Turkestan region was greatly increased by the construction of this line, begun in 1880. It started from Krasnovodsk and, following the Persian and Afghan borders, it reached Merv in 1886, and by 1888 this railroad was completed up to Samarkand. However, the Trans-Caspian Railway was formally opend in 1888, and its later branches connected it to Tashkent and Andijan, in the vicinity of the Chinese frontier. Its branch which excited special jealousy and anxiety on the part of the British Government was built "to run from Merv to the Afghan frontier where a fortified post, Kuchka, was erected." [13] Thus the construction of Trans- Caspian Railroad brought Central Asia and China nearer to Europe, and opened to Russia fertile fields for commercial expansion. It not only speeded up Russian-Persian trade but also made it possible for the Government of St. Petersburg to easily despatch troops to the Persian and Afghan borders. Thus this railway had economic as well as strategic importance, and was bound to affect British interests adversely, and therefore, it gave the British a cause for anxiety. [14] But the construction of the Trans-Caucasian Railway, which was extended to Julfa on the Persian border, and situated on the road to Tabriz and Teheran, was of greater importance. Henceforth, the Russian Government extensively exploited the special economic and tariff rights obtained by the Treaty of Turkmanchai, and secured economic penetration and domination in Persia. This made the British active in counter-acting Russian influence by intensifying their efforts for economic expansion in that part of Asia.

Moreover, the growing industrialization of Great Britain and Russia demanded raw materials to feed the machines, and new markets for finished goods. Therefore, a struggle for concessions started; and the commercial competition at times necessitated political intervention also. In 1872 Baron Julius de Reuter, a naturalised British

12. Rostovsky, *op. cit*, 198.
13. *Ibid.*, 173-4.
14. Sidney Harcave, *Russia : a History* (Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, 1952) 336.

export, and sale of all tobacco in Persia This monopoly affected the tobacco growers, sellers and smokers in that country, and was a blow to Persian rights. A wave of general indignation was aroused in Persia, which was supported by the religious leaders of the country who forbade the use of tobacco there Finally, the concession was cancelled aud the Shah agreed to pay compensation to the tune of half a million sterling - a sum that was borrowed from the Imperial Bank of Persia.[20] This considerably strengthened the British economic hold on that country.

Further, in 1890 the Imperial Bank of Persia purchased the concession for a carriage road from Teheran to the south of Persia [21] The Government of St. Petersburg did not lag behind, and in 1891 it obtained for seventy-five years the "monopoly of all transportation and insurance of goods", and later on the postal service was added to it [22] Meanwhile, the Russian Government once again scored a point over Great Britain, when in 1890, due to Anglo-Russian rivalry regarding railways, the Persian ruler concluded an agreement with St. Petersburg that no railways should be built in Persia during the next ten years.[23] Besides, the Russians also obtained some road concessions during this period, important of them was that of 1893 for the construction of the Enzeli-Teheran Hamadan highway [24] Prior to this, Russia had been granted the right to build telegraph lines; and in 1886 a concession had been granted for fishing in Persian waters of the Caspian sea. These concessions gained by the Northern Power strengthened its econcomic hold in Persia, and paved the way for its further commercial expansion in that country. The policy of the British Government was to oppose all encroachments by Russia in Persia, because the preservation of the integrity of Shah's dominions was an important element in the scheme for the defence of India The two Powers were striving to forestall each other, and, the policies followed by them were diametrically in opposition and the tension between the two rivals went on increasing till the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907.

20. Sykes, *Persia*, II, *op cit*, 373.
21. Aitchison, XII, *op cit*., Part I, 26.
22. Rostovsky, *op cit*, 199.
23. Aitchison, XII, *op. cit*, 20.
24. Rostovsky, *op cit*. 199.

Apart from Western Asia, Anglo-Russian antagonism found expression in the Chinese Empire also. Before 1895 the British had controlled the front door of China by their naval supremacy, but by taking in hand the construction of Trans-Siberian Railroad, St. Petersburg tried to open the back door. This was an indication that Russia was intent on applying the "counter-irritant", and threaten British commercial supremacy in the Far East as well, and this realisation caused considerable anxiety in England. Thus in 1890's Far East became an important centre of Russia's political and economic ambitions

From 1884 to 1891 China's imports had increased forty-five percent, and her rulers had consented to view with favour the building of railways Hence in 1893 Great Britain looked forward to seeing China take a still greater quantity of English goods in the coming years [25] In comparison to other countries Great Britain's commercial position in China was stronger, and the "British policy was to maintain and extend her favoured position " However, at this time, two factors indirectly challenged England's supremacy. The first was the unexpected rise in the strength of the Japanese Empire, and the second was the unanticipated military collapse of China against Japan.[27] At the outbreak of war between China and Japan, Great Britain held a predominant position in the Far East. By the beginning of 1894 her ' ships handled eighty-five per cent of that part of China's trade which was carried in foreign bottoms", and her position in China was paramount But at the end of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, the prestige of Her Majesty's Government stood "seriously diminished, and, as a result, changed the whole Oriental situation".

Korea, a tributary of China was a bone of contention between China and Japan, and was the immediate cause of trouble between the two countries. The two events which changed Korea's position from the 1860's onwards were "Russia's penetration into the vicinity of Korea, and the rise of Japan after the restoration of the Meiji."[26] Russia was also keen for the acquisition of Korea. England wanted Chinese suzerainty over it, while Japan endeavoured to establish its independence The British were anxious to check Russian expansion in eastern Asia, and they desired that China should not lose her

25 R. Stanley McCordock, *British Far Eastern Policy*, 1894-1900 (New York, London, 1931) 75.
26 *Ibid*
27. David J Dallin, *The Rise of Russia in Asia* (New Haven, 1949) 29

suzerainty over Korea. Great Britain longed to see China as strong as possible, because a strong and invincible China would serve her interests better. China would act as a buffer between the respective spheres of interests of St. Patersburge and London in the Far East. A powerful China interposed as a barrier between the two antagonistic European Powers would minimise the chances of friction and collision between them. Besides, the British feared that Russian occupation of Korea would lead to its being surrounded with high-tariff barriers, and therefore, England opposed Russia and other powers when they tried to establish their authority there.

Meanwhile, the Japanese, who had gone to Korea after the treaty of 1876, had established many reforms in that Kingdom. This aroused opposition in some quarters and riots broke out during 1882 and 1884. The Japanese support to the movement, in favour of internal reforms, made the relations between China and Japan all the more strained. However, in April 1885, the two countries agreed to withdraw their troops and both pledged not to send any military advisers to Korea.[29] Besides, they also agreed to notify the other in case of necessity arising in future to despatch troops; it was an agreement which recognised Japan's interest there.[29]

England and China were opposed to Russian advance in the Far East, while both Japan and Russia were opposed to Chinese authority in Korea, and favoured Korean independence. But Japan's desire for the independence of Korea meant a step against Russia, because the Japanese considered the possibility of Russian predominance in Korea as a major menace and wanted to avoid it by all possible means.[30] On the other hand, the policy followed by St. Petersburg was anti-British and anti-Chinese, because Great Britain was supporting China's claim to sovereignty over Korea.

Besides, at about the same time that Russia made acquisition of Chinese territories in the east, it began to penetrate Chinese Turkestan through Russian Central Asia, and this was also part of Anglo-Russian competition for Eurasia.[31] Thus the political and economic penetration of China by Russia was a cause of grave concern to the British. In fact, this Russo-British hostility

28. *Ibid*
29. McCordock, *op. cit*, 79.
30. Dallin, *op. cit.*, 30.
31. *Ibid*, 31.

was a part of that antagonism in which the two Powers were involved all over the world, and it was partly a product of Russian expansion into Central Asia Russia's expansion in Western China brought the Anglo-Russian spheres into contact within Sinkiang, the north coming to the Government of St Petersburg, and the south to the British Government.

The nineties were marked by another Russian push towards the Pacific, with the construction of Trans-Siberian Railway, which was started in 1891 This venture on the part of St. Petersburg created most immediate political repercussions in Japan and Korea, because "to Japan, the Russian outpost at Vladivostok and the inevitable drive into adjacent Korea represented a considerable danger."[32] This Russian menace was one of the most important causes that prompted Japan to declare war against China over Korea in 1894 England was anxious to protect her commerce, hence she proclaimed her neutrality China could not stand against the military superiority of Japan, and suffered defeat after defeat. This extraordinary and unexpected display of military might by Japan made the Europeans and Americans feel uneasy Great Britain made frantic efforts to save China, and sought to bring the war to an end, as early as possible In the interest of their trade and commerce it was but natural that the British should attempt to find an early solution of the problem Besides, they were also apprehensive of Russian designs, and feared that Russia would try to fish in the troubled waters by stepping in and gaining a predominant position in Korea and China Therefore, the British Government sought the cooperation of other Powers for a joint intervention with a view to end the Sino-Japanese War But the British intentions were defeated when the proposal for mediation by the Western Powers failed to gain the support of Germany and the United States.

In the end, China had to accept the peace terms transmitted to her by Japan The Sino-Japanese Treaty of Shimonoseki (April 1895), proclaimed the independence of Korea; annexation by Japan of the Islands of Formosa and the Pescadores; payment of a war indemnity of two hundred million taels by China, and cession of the tip of Liaotung Peninsula, in Manchuria, with Port Arthur, to Japan. The cession of Liaotung, a strategic area in Manchuria, was considered by Russia as a menace to its position, besides giving to

32, *Ibid*, 36

Japan a preponderant influence over Peking Therefore, Russia along with France and Germany objected to this acquisition by Japan, and presented her with a note demanding the restoration of Liaotung to China Japan deemed it wise to heed the wishes of the three Powers and abandoned her possession of the Liaotung Peninsula, and in return received an increased indemnity.

This war revealed the military weakness of China and the emerging power of Japan. The Government of St, Petersburg well realised that there was a good opportunity of enhancing its interests at the expense of China, and that Japan was a powerful rival for the areas which interested it. The intervention of the Russian Government against the acquisition of Liaotung by Japan, and subsequent restoration of that Peninsula to China was a diplomatic victory for St. Petersburg, and the Russians lost no time in reaping the fruits of their triumph. "One of the weapons of the Great Powers in China was loans, in return for each of which the bankrupt Chinese Government was expected to accede to political and economic demands."[33] Franco-Russian loan to China supplied the money for the payment of the first instalment of the indemnity[34] Besides, this Sino-Russian loan contract of July 1895, provided for Russia's participation in any international supervision of China's finances that might be instituted in future.[35] This Russian loan given in 1895, undermined British prestige in China. The Government of St. Petersburg did not stop here, and in December 1895, the Russo-Chinese Bank, which was nominally a Russian corporation and endowed with broad powers like coinage, tax collection, and holding of concessions, was founded. "To carry out the railway clauses of their agreement Russia in 1895 chartered the Russo-Chinese Bank, the object of which was to carry out the policy of what came to be called 'conquest by railways',....."[36]. After the Sino-Japanese War, the Russian drive into Manchuria, Mongolia, and Korea aroused British jealousy and enmity. However, this phase of Russia's Far Eastern drive lasted for a short while, and culminated in tho Russo-Japanese War of 1904.

33. Harcave, *op. cit.* 343.
34. Florinsky, *op. cit* 1264-5.
35. *Ibid*, 1265.
36. H.B. Morse, *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, 1894-1911 (Shanghai, Hongkong, Singapore, Yakohama, 1918) III, 83.

Great Britain had kept aloof from intervening on behalf of China in the peace settlement of 1895 In England the pro- Japanese tendency had been greatly strengthened after the Sino-Japanese War, because the peace terms demanded by Japan had called for many commercial advantages in China, which Great Britain would also obtain by virtue of the most-favoured-nation clause [37] Besides, the British were keen to seize the chance of capturing the Japanese market, because as a new world power, she was bound to take increased quantity of European goods, and England's silence was likely to bring Japan to her side Moreover, the British saw in Japan a power which could possibly become a barrier to Russian expansion in the Far East, and they soon started discounting the advisability of making an alliance with her [38]

The non-intervention of Her Majesty's Government at the time of peace settlement, earned China's enmity and pushed her into the open arms of Russia. Great Britain's silence led to the enhancement of St Petersburg's prestige and influence in China, which ultimately posed a threat to British supremacy there But by not co-operating with the interventionists, Rosebery "laid the foundations of Britain's friendship with the Island Empire - an empire which nine years later proved itself strong enough to check Russian penetration into China "[39]

However, before the Russian advance had been turned from Central Asia to Manchuria, a general struggle for territorial gains had started in Africa Great Britain and France were the leaders in this field, and they were followed shortly after by Germany. "From the Congress of Berlin onwards the relations of the European Powers were complicated in an increasing degree by territorial and commercial rivalry outside Europe, and the Dark Continent offered a tempting field for expansion, ambition and intrigue ....."[40] The conflicting interests of European Powers created friction, and England and France stood on the verge of war more than once. Africa was also the cause of serious differences between the British and German Governments, and throughout 1895 the two Powers "stood in open antagonism in South Africa, each resolved to counter-work the encroachments of the other "[41] Besides, in China also the policy pursued

37 McCordock, *op cit*, 120
38 *Ibid*
39 *Ibid* 141
40. Gooch, *op cit*, 61
41 *Ibid*, 181

by Great Britain and Germany took different courses. The French, who stood estranged from the British, formed an alliance with the Russians; and the Germans, whose policy came in conflict with the English interests in Africa, championed the cause of Russia in the Far East.

Further, an important issue which was attracting the attention of St. Petersburg in the early nineties, was the Armenian question. This question was assuming international importance because af the persecution suffered by the Turkish Armenians, and the policy of the Goverment of Russia was to protect these Armenians in order to conciliate their own Armenian population.[42] Besides, the Russians considered it necessary to prevent the rival Powers from intervening on behalf of these people, because if the British espoused the cause of Armenians, it would lead to the extension of Great Britain's influence "into that most vulnerable zone along the Caucasian frontier at a time when the rivalry between the two powers was at its most acute stage." [43] Turkey's failure to carry out any reforms in Armenia led to unrest which resulted in a series of massacres, organised by the Muslim population between 1894 and 1896. England was eager to secure reforms for the Armenians, but could not succeed due to Russia's antipathy. When Czar Alexander II wished to emancipate the Christian subjects of the Sultan, he was thwarted by Disraeli, and when Salisbury and Kimberley championed their cause, the Government of St Petersburg turned the table on them and frustrated their plan.[44]

Now, turning to Siam we find that the British annexation of Burma in 1885 made it a buffer between the dominions of Great Britain to the west and French Indo-China to the east. This dispute about the boundaries of their respective spheres of influence had brought the two powers on the verge of an armed conflict. France had some grievances against Siam, and having failed to find redress by peaceful means she decided to enforce her demands, and thereby created the crisis of 1893. The British were anxious to protect their commerce, while the French were prepared to find a solution for their grievances by resort to arms. But ultimately the

42. Rostovsky, *op. cit.*, 201.
43. *Ibid*
44. Gooch, *op. cit* , 204.

boundaries of the buffer state were fixed in 1896, and it ended the antagonism of the two countries in this part of Asia.

However, this Franco-British struggle involved Siam in European rivalries in Asia and the Government of St. Petersburg took interest in that country because of its new friendship with France, and also as a new move against England.[45] Since the Russians wanted to secure their political and economic interests by helping France their interest in Siam was a part of that scheme

Further, from 1891 onwards the Russian activities in the region of the Pamirs alarmed the Indian Government once again Afghanistan's north-eastern frontier had not been properly delimited and there was every possibility of Russia making encroachments on Afghan territory in that direction Besides, there was also a possibility of St Petersburg attacking India through Kashmir and Tibet. China's outlying possession Sinkiang was bounded on the north by Mongolia, on the east by Kansu and Kokonor, on the south by *Tibet, on the south-west by Kashmir, and on the west and north-west* by Russian Turkestan The Russian Government was striving so that its influence should penetrate upto Kashgar and Yarkand; but the Chinese Government was opposed to a Russian occupation of Kashgaria Moreover, it was a barrier between Russia and India just as much as Afghanistan, and the India Government regarded it as their sphere of interest They regarded its preservation from Russian encroachments as an important element in the scheme of the defence of India Kashgar and Yarkand were situated far from China's Central Government, and they might be occupied by Russia before assistance could reach them Therefore, in view of the safety of their interest in Kashgar and their Empire in India, the British desired that the Chinese should be strong to hold Kashgaria against a Russian occupation Further, these Russian activities in the vicinity of Sinkiang prompted the Government of India to devise ways and means for strengthening the North-West Frontier This resulted in the adoption of a more active and forward policy, and the improvement of the means of transport and communication. Besides, in 1890 the southern boundary of Tibet was delimited by a convention which assigned Sikkim to India, and by the Convention of December, 1893, "China opened Yatung as a 'trade mart' for the

45 Rostovsky, *op cit*, 209

trade between Tibet and Sikkim and agreed to exempt the whole trade from customs duties for five years; "[46] Therefore, like Persia and Manchuria, the plateau of Tibet had also to be guarded against Russian encroachments.

However, the construction of strategic railways coupled with other measures of safety taken by the Indian Government alarmed the Amir, who imagined that India's forward policy was prompted by motives which were bound to prove a potential threat to Afghanistan. Amir's feeling of insecurity from the side of India reasulted in an Indo-Afghan tension for quite some time. The British, on their part, considered it essential for the security of their empire in India that the integrity of Afghanistan, and the distance which separated the Russian and Indian frontiers, should be jealously maintained. St. Petersburg was making steady advance, and the Government of India never wanted to be taken unawares, and therefore, they started making neceseary preparations for facing any eventuality.

Moreover, the British were anxious to maintain their political and economic influence in these regions of Asia, and they regarded Russian advance as an encroachment in their sphere England had to safeguard her economic interests, and make adequate preparations to protect Afghanistan and India from probable Russian attack. Similarly, in China also Great Britain wished to preserve the Yangtsze Kiang as her economic sphere, and the British deemèd it absolutely necessary to stop the pressure by St. Petersburg upon China. Therefore, in these circumstances the Indian Government had to strengthen their north-west frontier by adopting a vigorous policy, and they expected the Amir to cooperate with them. Abdur Rahman, who was anxious to maintain his country's freedom, saw in British policy and preparation a threat to Afghanistan's political integrity and economic stability. He wanted to protect his country from the clutches of two belligerent powers, which were involved in international conflicts and had an outstanding record of rivalry and jealousy. Therefore, the Indian Government's forward policy made the Amir entertain some suspicion of their intentions, and ultimately the Indo-Afghan relations became clouded and surcharged with tension.

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46 Morse, II, *op. cit.*, 412.

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THE PROBLEM OF INDIA'S DEFENCE

To safeguard their North-West Frontier against Russia, Afghanistan, or the tribes inhabiting the region between the Indian and Afghan frontiers, the Government of India adopted an active and forward policy The real danger was from Russia, but the activities of Amir Abdur Rahman also became for a time source of anxiety to the Indian Government. The Amir's suspicious nature, and his keenness to maintain his country's independence made him view the Indian railway and defence schemes for a scientific frontier with considerable misgivings. The British administrators of India were keen to implement schemes of active defence and their active policy in the construction of roads and other means of communication which would facilitate the movement of troops in an emergency. However, due to mutual mistrust and lack of appreciation of each other's view point a misunderstanding was created between the two Governments, and from 1888 to 1893 the Indo-Afghan relations were quite strained and became tense. But this tension did not last long owing to the resurgence of Russian activities in the Pamirs, and ultimately came to an end with the visit of the Durand Mission to Kabul, and the appointment of Pamir Commission

One of the major causes of friction between the Government of India and the Afghan ruler, which strained their relations to a great extent, was the Amir's activity in Afghan Turkestan. Sardar Ishak Khan, the Governor of that province, revolted against the authority of Amir Abdur Rahman, but the rebellion was successfully suppressed by Amir's military forces. The Kabul ruler himself proceeded to Turkestan, near the northern border of his dominions,

with a considerable force in order in restore peace in that province where such a serious outbreak had taken place. He adopted the method of repression and meted out severe punishment to those who had tried to overthrow his authority This deterrent step was thought necessary for keeping the disaffected districts under firm control. Any weakness on that side of the Amir's borders would have provided Russia an opportunity of fishing in the troubled waters, who might intrigue with the disaffected and disloyal elements of that region, and make encroachements within the frontiers of Afghan Kingdom. However, Abdur Rahman's long stay in Afghan Turkestan perturbed Her Majesty's Government, as they feared that the Amir's activities and utterances might afford the Russians a pretext for making further advance in that direction. Therefore, the India Government warned the Amir against using language in public, or acting in amanner calculated to arouse a feeling of resentment in Russia.[1] Further, the Government of India also required a statement about the disposition of the Turkestan troops.[2] On his part, the Amir refused to give the Indian Government information about the strength and distribution of the Afghan Army[3] He regarded such an enquiry as improper and out of place. Besides, the Viceroy's letter of remonstrance to Amir regarding the alleged cruelties perpetrated upon his rebellious subjects[4] came as a surprise to Abdur Rahman, who regarded such matters as essentially his concern, lying wholly within the zone of the internal affairs of Afghanistan which were outside the purview of Indian Government. He resented Lord Lansdowne's reaction to his refusal to supply full particulars about his forces to the Government of India, that he should not expect the English people to feel themselves bound to help an ally who declined to disclose his strength and resources.[5] This attitude of the Indian Government gave the Amir an impression that the British were trying to interfere in his internal matters; an attitude which was contrary to the Agreement of 1880, and which annoyed the Amir and weakened the bonds of friendship existing between the two Governments.

1. *Foreign, Dept Progs.* Sec. F., March 1889, Nos. 71-109, No. 91.
2. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Sept. 1889, Nos. 256-64, No. 261.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., Sept. 1889, Nos. 265-81, No. 278.
5. *Ibid.*

Moreover, the gradual British advance towards the frontiers of Afghanistan further widened the gulf between Abdur Rahman and the Indian Government The local question of tribal policy was closely related to the problem of imperial defence.[6] The Government of India adopted a forward policy, considering it as the best means of ensuring the extension of their influence amongst the wild tribes upto the frontiers of Afghanistan, but that policy resulted in an abnormally disturbed state of affairs in the frontier districts throughout the nineties of the nineteenth century.

The British policy towards the Waziri tribe was one other cause of friction between the ruler of Afghanistan and the Indian Government The subject of opening up and making the Gomal Pass route safe was revived in 1885, as one of the measure for the defence of the North-Western Frontier of India.[7] The occupation of the Gomal Pass, construction of a strong fortified post there, and the exploration of the routes through the pass upwards towards Zhob and Pishin were considered by the military authorities as necessary means for the security of the frontier, though the Government of India had no intention to undertake them immediately.[8] However, in 1887, the Secretary of State took the initiative again and directed the Government of India to undertake, as early as practicable, a proper survey of the Gomal Pass and fix upon a site for the erection of fortifications.[9] The Gomal Pass itself was regarded as an admirable military position, turning the flank of Mahsud Waziris, the most intractable tribe on this border.[10] Hence the view that the occupation of the Gomal and the line of the Zhob would bring peace and security to the Dera Ismail Khan border and provide a scientific military frontier. The strategic requirement prompted the British to extend their influence over the intervening tribes and bring the Indian frontier into line with that of the Amir of Afghanistan Moreover, the British assumed that a frontier contiguous to that of the Kingdom of Kabul would enable them to observe, and if necessary to control, events in Afghanistan; and this was the great military object underlying the move to advance the

6 C C Davies, *The Problem of the North-West Frontier 1890-1908* (London, 1932) 18

7 *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec E, April 18 0, Nos. 15-60, No. 23.

8. *Ibid*

9 *Ibid*

10. *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. E., April 1890, Nos 15-60, No. 20.

frontier.[11] Further, to command the line of the Zhob it was absolutely necessary to occupy the Gomal Pass, which was the key to the position. Moreover, in the vast scheme of Imperial defence on which the Government of India had entered during this period, the establishment of safe communications and trade routes between India and Afghanistan had become a matter of primary importance. However, the scheme of Imperial defence could not be carried through in its entirety unless the isolation of Waziristan from the sphere of British influence was brought to an end, and the Gomal and Tochi Passes were thrown open. The former route by leading to Kandahar and Khelat-i-Ghilzai, and the latter by leading to Ghazni would pave the way for the successful achievement of the British scheme for a scientific frontier, and it would help to check the Russian advance from Western Afghanistan or Afghan Turkestan into India.

The Government of India wanted to intimate the Amir of their intentions about the Gomal Pass, but they were keen that such an intimation should not reach him too soon, for otherwise he might stir up trouble in the tribal area and create difficulties for the British.[12] In January 1890, Lord Lansdowne informed Amir Abdur Rahman that the lawless state of the country in the immediate neighbourhood of the Gomal Pass was a source of danger to the Indian Government.[13] Gomal Pass was a convenient route between Quetta and the adjoining districts and parts of the Punjab. The British troops moving from Quetta, or from the Zhob and Bori Valley, towards Dera Ismail Khan and other stations had to make a long and circuitous journey from Shikarpore and the valley of the Indus. It was of great importance that there should be no obstructions in the way of the direct movement of troops along the Zhob Valley and through the Gomal Pass, even in ordinary times, but more particularly when military operations might be in progress. Moreover, that pass was greatly used by traders for commercial purposes who might suffer owing to the badness of the road and insecurity.

The Amir was further informed that for the pacification and better government of the Kakars, who inhabited the valley of the

11. *Ibid*
12. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. E., April 1890, Nos. 15-60, K.W. 2.
13. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. E., April 1890, Nos. 15-60, No. 55.

Zhob River, the Governor-General's Agent in Baluchistan had been instructed to raise armed levies in that country, and to improve the principal roads which ran through it.[14] The Viceroy thought it prudent to take advantage of Sir Robert Sandeman's presence in the Zhob Valley to enter into arrangements with the Waziri tribes who lived in the pass and along the Gomal River. It was proposed that arrangements should be made with them for improving the roads through the pass and for guarding the travellers against plunder and other inconveniences Such an arrangement was likely to prove advantageous both to India and to Afghanistan. According to Lord Lansdowne, rapid movement and concentration of British troops upon any points along the frontier, which might be threatened, would be advantageous to Afghanistan.[15] Besides, that arrangement would lead to the development of Afghanistan's commerce. Further, the Government of India made it clear that they had no intention of encroaching upon any part of the Amir's territories. The Governor-General informed him in explicit terms that the British Government had always dealt directly with the Waziri tribes and must continue to do so, but there was no intention of occupying any territory or interfering with any tribes which belonged to the Kingdom of Afghanistan [16] Moreover, the Viceroy gave the Amir to understand that his only desire was to strengthen the Afghan ruler against dangers which threatened his kingdom, and to aid him in protecting his interests from injury.[17] Therefore, the Indian Government did not expect the Afghan ruler to interfere in Waziristan and Daur

However, the Amir did not feel satisfied with these assurances of the Government of India. Therefore, wherever the British had pushed forward the Kabul ruler too pushed forward in opposition to them This counter-movement on the part of Abdur Rahman irritated the Government of India In a letter dated 6 July 1892, the Amir was informed that the British Government did not admit his right to do what he had already done by advancing into and occupying portions of the Waziri land, and places such as

14 *Ibid*

15 *Ibid*

16. *Ibid*

17. *Foreign Dept. Progs*., Sec. F., March 1892, Nos. 72-98, No. 94.

Gulkach between it and the Gomal river.[18] Abdur Rahman was warned in the clearest terms that the British would not tolerate any further advance on the part of his officers and troops, or permit him to establish any new post, or to increase any garrison which he might be having, in Waziristan or the country to the south of it.[19] Besides, Lansdowne in his letter of 23 July 1892, informed the Amir that in order to put an end to further trouble on the border, and misunderstandings between the two Governments, The Government of India had determined that the settlement of his frontier on the Indian side should not be indefinitely delayed, and therefore, it had been decided to comply with the Afghan ruler's request, an to effect a settlement of the frontier during the coming winter.[20] But, pending a settlement of the frontier his troops were allowed to retain temporarily their position in Wana. His occupation of Wana and other places had been permitted for the time being solely because the Government of India wished to consider at one and the same time all the questions connected with the settlement of his frontier, and to give him the fullest opportunity of representing his claims and explaining the conduct of his officers. Lord Roberts was selected to meet the Amir, and he was also given to understand that whether he accepted the offer of meeting the Commander-in-Chief or not, it would be necessary to decide what territory did, and what did not, form part of the Kingdom of Afghanistan.

Regarding the Waziri country, the Amir in his reply dated 3 August 1892, informed the Governor-General that since that country formed a portion of the limits of Afghanistan, the territory to the south of the Gomal belonged to the British Government, and the northern side belonged to him. [21] Besides, if his officers had made any movements within their own limits, they had done so in full consciousness of not departing from the limits of their territory. The Amir sarcastically asked whether the Viceroy considered the *entire* country north of the Gomal upto Ghazni and Mukur as lying *within* the limits of the Kakar country. Therefore, the Afghan ruler hoped

18. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., Aug. 1892, Nos. 65-149, No. 135.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Aug. 1892, Nos. 573-77, No. 574.
21. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec., F., Oct. 1892, Nos. 144-72, No. 144.

that the Indian Government would send him a map of the country from Khost to Chaman

The Government of India regarded the land inhabited by the Waziri tribles as of much importance, because it faced the centre of the Kabul-Kandahar line, and through it the two well known passes, the Tochi and the Gomal, led from Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan districts into Afghanistan [22] The Government of India attached great value to these passes for strategic reasons. They had already opened up the Gomal Pass, which was a main trade route, largely used by the wandering Powinda clans in their yearly migrations to British territory It further afforded an approach from the Punjab via Zhob to Quetta, and it was held by levy posts Besides, Wana—a Waziri district at the western extremity of Gomal, occupied a very important position on the Dera Ismail Khan frontier. It commanded the Gomal Pass, the Mahsud country, and the different routes leading into Afghanistan, and therefore the Amir was keen to keep that place under his control, while the British were anxious to deprive him of that position of vantage

The Government of India were of opinion that it was essential to the security of their position that they should maintain good relations with the independent tribes on their north-western frontier through whose territory the main passes led into Afghanistan. In order to attain that object, they thought that it was indispensable to have direct dealings with them, and to convince them that their interests lay in keeping on good terms with the Indian Government. Therefore, it was unlikely that in such a situation they would permit the Waziris to be controlled by the Amir, who was not regarded at this time by the Indian Government as a trustworthy ally or a satisfactory neighbour. The Lansdowne Government was under the impression that it could coerce the Afghan ruler and compel him to acquiesce in such measures as were necessary for the purpose of securing military position; and meeting a danger to which both India and Afghanistan were exposed. [23]

Meanwhile, some outrages were committed on the Waziri frontier which were, in the opinion of the Punjab Government, attributable to the presence of the Amir's agents in Waziri territory.[24]

22 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, August 1892, Nos 573-7, No 575.

23 *Ibid*

24 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F., Oct. 1892, Nos 144-72, No. 150

The Indian Government considered it impossible to allow the continuance of alleged Afghan interference with Waziristan, and the consequent disturbance of the Zhob district. Therefore, they decided to send and small force consisting of 100 cavalry, 300 infantry and 2 guns into the Gomal Valley.[25] This force at Kajuri Kach would watch the Waziri country, and, if necessary, it would expel without any difficulty the Amir's agent at Wana, who had only 200 irregulars with him.[26] The Government of India believed that such a measure would suffice by itself to convince Abdur Rahman that they were in earnest, and would induce him to abandon dilatory tactics regarding the settlement of the points in dispute.

Lansdowne informed the Amir that his agents had been using Wana as a base for intrigues amongst the Waziri tribes, which had been greatly disturbed by their presence, and several outrages had resulted in consequence. He requested the Afghan ruler to withdraw his Agent, Sardar Gul Muhammad Khan, and the whole of Afghan troops and officials with him, from Wana and Gulkach and the neighbourhood, on or before 1 October. The Amir was informed that if they were not withdrawn by that date, the Viceroy would be compelled to force their withdrawal; and if Abdur Rahman conceived that he had any claim to Wana, his arguments would receive the fullest consideration at the proper time, but, in the meanwhile, it was impossible that he should be allowed to remain in occupation of that place.[27] As a result of this threat, ultimately, the Amir informed the Governor-General that he had called Sardar Gul Muhammad Khan within the limits of Wazkhah, and that Wana and Gulkach had been evacuated.[28]

Another cause of friction and misunderstanding between the Indian and Afghan Governments was the problem of Bajaur. The British were trying to pursue towards the frontier tribes a policy which they considered as most advantageous to their interests and most embarrassing to Russia. But the Amir suspected that they were striking at his independence, and this idea led to bitterness between the two Governments. The importance of a gradual con-

25. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., Sept 1892, Nos 96-322, No. 141.
26 *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Oct. 1892, Nos. 144-72, No. 150.
27. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., Oct. 1892, Nos. 144-72, No. 156.
28. *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F., Oct. 1892, Nos. 144-72, No. 162.

solidation of British authority among the independent tribes living between British India and the borders of Afghanistan was fully recognised by Her Majesty's Government, and the contemporary situation seemed favourable for dealing with the question. Therefore, they wanted to preserve the independence of Bajaur, which they regarded as outside the sphere of Amir's influence. But Abdur Rahman had different ideas and like the Government of India he too tried to consolidate his influence over Bajaur.

The Government of India held the view that Swat, Bajaur and Chitral formed no part of Afghanistan But they never claimed Bajaur as in any way dependent on them, and they never claimed supremacy over it Nevertheless, since their occupation of the Punjab, they had steadily declined to let the Amir of Afghanistan absorb the independent khannates which formed Bajaur, and they had endeavoured to keep on good terms with their rulers The Rulers of Afghanistan, on the other hand, had steadily endeavoured to extend their influence over the district, and Amir Abdur Rahman worked persistently for this object, and he claimed Bajaur and Swat as part of the heritage of the Durranis. The Indian Government regarded Bajaur as beyond the sphere of Amir's influence, because they had always dealt with the Khans of Bajaur themselves. Therefore, when they objected to the Amir's actions, they assumed that they were simply adhering to their traditional policy of excluding the Amir from interference in Bajaur In fact, they were committed to the policy of maintaining the independence of Bajaur, and Umra Khan's stout resistence to the Amir served their purpose very well. [29] But it cannot be denied that Umra Khan's activities in Bajaur and the help rendered to him by Mian Gul of Swat were also a source of anxiety to Kabul ruler, and it is very likely that his policy towards Bajaur was motivated by a consideration of keeping in check the powerful Jandol Chief, who was a friend of the British. However, the Amir's occupation of Asmar, and his refusal to take his hands off that place were distasteful to the British, who thought that the Afghan ruler held a point of vantage from where he could easily threaten Jandol and Chitral. This idea created mistrust and misunderstanding between the Governments of India and Afghanistan

29. *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F, Aug, 1892, Nos 257-403, K W. I.

Abdur Rahman, on his part regarded Asmar as part of Kunar, forming the frontier of Afghanistan in the direction of Chitral. [30] He refused to evacuate Asmar because he considered it as the gateway to his territory. [31] He had no intention to relinquish his hold on Jalalabad and Kunar, which might be the consequence, in his view, of giving up Asmar. Another reason which he advanced to the Viceroy was that Asmar would be a useful shield for keeping the Russians away from the frontiers of India. He believed that if Russians desired to come via Chitral, they could enter Kunar in three marches, and at that time it would not be possible for him to make any other arrangements for repelling the Russians than strengthening and fortifying Asmar. Moreover, in the direction of Chitral, Asmar was also the frontier of his country, and therefore he was not in a position to give up that important place, although he was prepared to leave Bajaur on account of the great regard he had for the British Government. [32] The Indian Government, on the contrary, felt that if Abdur Rahman was permitted to retain Asmar, he would endeavour to extend his influence into Rajaur and Chitral employing intrigue and money as his weapons. Such a development would necessarily hamper the British forward move, and was likely to obstruct the extension of their influence to these places. Therefore, the Government of India wrote to the Amir once again regarding Asmar, but the Afghan ruler, in his reply of 3 August 1892, informed them that Asmar was the limit and "bundar" of the Kunar territory, and inevitably it should be in his possession. [33]

The Government of India wrote to Her Majesty's Government that the Amir's frontier on the Kunar river was placed at a point some twenty-five miles above Asmar, and within thirty or forty miles of the capital of Chitral, with which state the Amir's possessions on the Kunar river would, if this claim were admitted, become conterminous. The Lansdowne Government feared that if the Chiefship of Asmar was extinguished and a well-armed Afghan force was allowed to establish itself on the Kunar river between Kafiristan and Bajaur, the independence of Jandol and the rest of Bajaur would be seriously threatened. Even without leaving the

30. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., Sept. 1892, Nos. 479-90, No. 479.
31. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Aug. 1893, Nos. 573-80, No. 576.
32. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Sept. 1892, Nos. 479-90, 479.
33. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Oct. 1892, Nos. 144-72, No. 144.

line of the river, Ghulam Haidar could occupy portions of Barawal a tract then in the hands of Umra Khan of Jandol, and he could, by presents of money and arms, by permitting the Afghan soldiers to take an unostentatious part in the dissensions of the Khans, and by numerous other means, gradually disintegrate the country, and bring about the loss of its independence, contrary to the interests of the Government of India. Besides, Ghulam Haidar's proximity to Chitral would inevitably bring severe pressure to bear on the Chitral Chief, and with an Afghan force established upon Chitrali frontier and only two or three marches from the Mehtar's capital, Aman-ul-Mulk would be entirely in the Amir's hands; he would be completely cut off from communication with Peshawar, and the importance of the Gilgit Agency in Chitral would also be destroyed. Moreover, the Government of India apprehended that they would lose all hold on the direct road to Chitral, which might someday lead to serious consequences [34] Therefore, on these grounds, the Lansdowne Government considered the Amir's advance up the Kunar river as damaging to their interests, and they wanted him to evacuate Asmar.

The Indian Government naturally believed that Abdur Rahman owed to them his throne and the resources which had enabled him to maintain it, and therefore he had no right whatever to resent any action that the Government of India might see fit to take with regary to tribes and places which they never handed over to him, and which formed no part of his dominions Nevertheless, the Viceroy ultimately informed the Amir that if the Afghans at Asmar and Chageh abstained from provoking a breach of the peace, and if no further trouble arose rendering further action on the part of the Government of India unnecessary, the Afghan forces would, out of consideration for the Afghan ruler, be allowed for the present to remain at those places in the hope that an amicable settlement with regard to them might be concluded within a reasonable time, and his claims to them would be carefully examined when such a settlement took place [35] Thus Bajaur also remained a point in dispute between the two Governments.

During this period the state of affairs in Chitral was also fraught with causes of misunderstanding between the two Govern-

34 *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F, Aug 1892, Nos 573-77, No 575.
35 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Oct 1892. Nos 144-72, No 156

ments. The southern openings of the only passes which gave direct passage through the mountain ranges to Sarikol and the Pamirs belonged to the Chiefs of Hunza, Nagar and Chitral, and the Indian Government decided to acquire, through the Ruler of Kashmir, an efficient control over those passes.[36] In the Viceroyalty of Lord Lytton, it was considered expedient to exercise control over Chitral, Dir and Swat, in order to strengthen the frontiers of India and secure important observation posts on the routes leading into the British Indian Empire. His dread of Russia was the primary motive, in creating a ring of subordinate states on the frontiers of India but he was no less moved by the consideration of keeping the Kabul ruler under his control by these measures. Similarly, Lansdowne's fear of Russian activities in Central Asia coupled with his forward policy led to the re-establishment of the Gilgit Agency in 1889. From that time onwards the Government of India had endeavoured hard to extend their control over Chitral—an act which was not appreciated by Amir Abdur Rahman, who spared no pains to keep a strict watch over the affairs of that neighbouring state. But the Indian Government maintained very good relations with the rulers of Chitral; hence the establishment of British influence there, and their occupation of Hunza and stationing of an agent in Kafiristan created distrust in the Afghan ruler's mind

At this time Chitral was governed by old Aman-ul-Mulk. In 1891 the Government of India decided to raise the Mehtar's subsidy from rupees 6,000 to rupees 12,000 per year; and to give to Afzal-ul-Mulk and Nizam-ul-Mulk an annual present of rupees 1,500each; and to givetoShah-i-Mulk rupees 1,000 a year.[37] These allowances were contingent on good behaviour, and made on the condition that the Mehtar and his sons accepted the advice of the British Agent or his Deputy on all matters.[38] Further, it was also decided to depute four non-commissioned Muhammadan officers to Chitral to instruct the ruler's irregular forces; and at the same time the proposal to grant the Mehtar one hundred more Snider Carbines was also approved.[39] But Mehtar Aman-ul-Mulk died in August 1892, and on his death

36. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Frontier, A. Jan. 1898, No. 77, K.W. Part II.
37. *Selection of Despatches to Secretary of State for India*, July to Dec. 1891, Sec. F., No. 170, Enclosure, 8, 14 October 1891.
38. *Ibid.*
39. *Ibid.*

a scramble for the Mehtarship became inevitable amongst his seventeen sons. However, Sardar Afzal-ul-Mulk was recognised by his people as the Mehtar of the country, and the Government of India proceeded to congratulate Afzal, whom they believed to be loyally attached to their interest. The Indian Government had decided to depute Dr. Robertson to Chitral, to reassure Afzal-ul-Mulk and explain to him their policy and promise him, under suitable conditions, the same subsidy and support as was given to Aman-ul-Mulk.[40] They also wanted that Dr. Robertson should lay down the boundary between Bajaur and Chitral, if Jandol and Chitral agreed to it.[41] But, in the meantime, the situation in Chitral took a serious turn and Afzal-ul-Mulk was attacked and killed by his uncle, Sher Afzal, and Dr. Robertson could not go there.

At this period the Lansdowne Government got a hint of rumours then current that Sher Afzal had some Afghans with him, and that others were descending from Wakhan on Mastuj.[42] This led the British to suspect that Sher Afzal was the Amir's tool and inimical to them. Besides, they considered it undesirable to allow the Amir to remain in Kunar valley on Chitral border with his nominee as the Mehtar. However, Sher Afzal remained in power for a very short time, because, Nizam-ul-Mulk, hearing of the death of his younger brother, made an attempt to gain the throne of Chitral. Although the Indian Government was not prepared to interfere in the internal affairs of Chitral, they indirectly helped and encouraged Nizam-ul Mulk to take up arms against a ruler who was considered to be under the influence and control of the Amir of Kabul. The British thought that under Sher Afzal the Amir's influence would increase and their authority in Chitral would come to an end; but that they would be able to control the affairs of that State if Nizam-ul-Mulk achieved victory.

Prior to this, having come to know of the change in the state of affairs in Chitral, Nizam-ul-Mulk had written to the British Agent at Gilgit that, should he become Mehtar, he would agree to British officers being stationed in Chitral, and would carry out all the orders of the Government of India. The British Agent permitted Nizam-ul-Mulk, who had come to Gilgit, to leave that place, and despatched

40 *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Jan. 1893, Nos. Nos. 1-161, No. 11.

41 Ibid.

42. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Jan. 1893. Nos. 1-161, No. 53.

250 rifles, 2 guns, and one hundred levies to Gupis, opposite the mouth of the Yasin valley, and a few miles beyond the frontier of the Gilgit district. The British Agent wanted to strengthen his own position against Sher Afzal, and preserve order in the western part of the district and in Yasin, and also assist Nizam-ul-Mulk indirectly or directly. However, shortly after the occupation of Drasan by Nizam-ul-Mulk (1 December 1892), Sher Afzal fled to Asmar. Nizam-ul-Mulk, after establishing himself as the Ruler of Chitral, requested the Government of India to send a British officer to him and the Indo-British Government at once seized this opportunity of once again establishing their influence there, and they also decided to post the troops at Gupis.[43] Thus the possibility of the so-called Afghan intrigues from the side of Asmar gave the Government of India a plea for assisting Nizam-ul-Mulk to establish himself.

Thus the main objects of the Indian policy in Chitral were to control the Mehtar's external affairs in a direction friendly to British interests, to gain an effective guardianship over Chitral's northern passes and to keep an eye on the events beyond them[44]. But the Indian Government's belief that the Amir was instigating and helping Sher Afzal created misunderstanding between the two Governments. The British felt that unless they held the Amir in check, they would not be able to regain and extend their hold over that country, and their policy of a contented and united Chitral thoroughly under their influence would fall to pieces. The fear of Amir's interference, and the near prospect of the Russian occupation made it a matter of great importance for the British to control the affairs of Chitral.

Another question which strained relations between the two Governments was the management of Kurram Valley. Among the matters to which Lansdowne's attention was directed after his arrival in India was the state of affairs in the Kurram Valley, which he regarded as unsatisfactory. A Joint Commisssion was appointed in 1888 to enquire into and settle all outstanding disputes between the Turis of Kurram and the Amir's subjects. It was hoped that the joint endeavours of Indian and Afghan Commissioners would result in bringing about, not only a settlement of outstanding disputes but some satisfactory arrangement for the future. However,these hopes remained unfulfilled, and the Government of India felt that it was solely due

43. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., Jan. 1893, Nos 1-161, No.160.

44. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Frontier, A. Jan. 1898, No. 77, K.W. II.

to the uncompromising attitude of the Afghan Commissioner, Sardar Shirin-dil Khan, that the negotiations had been unsuccesssful.[45] Therefore, the Indian Government disclaimed all responsibility for the failure of the negotiations, and also informed the Kabul ruler that as he was aware the Turis were regarded by them as having no connection with Kabul, and they also warned him that any interference with the Turis on the part of his agents would lead to very serious consequences.[46] Thus the settlement of Turis affair was allowed to drop for the present

However, it seems quite probable that the Amir was trying to anticipate a British occupation of the salients, and his officers were exerting to gain points of vantage in the lower Kurram Valley, Zhob and Wana, and other places. Besides, there was also a dispute between the people of Kharlachi, a village in Kurram, and their Afghan neighbours regarding the supply of water from the Kurram river. Moreover, the Indian Government held the view that Chikkai-a freebooter, who was in possession of a part of Kurram was the Amir's Agent. Thus due to so-called unsatisfactory relations between the Turis and the Afghans the Government of India got the opportunity of entering the Kurram Valley. In 1892 the Lansdowne Government decided " to depute a Political Officer with troops to settle matters in Kurram,"[47] and to put an end to the existing state of tension between the Afghans and the Turis owing to border disputes, raids and counter-raids. However, the Indian Government did not think it likely that they would have to send more than a battalion of infantry and two guns, and they hoped before long to withdraw that force and replace it by Turi levies.[48] Ultimately these steps led to the occupation of the Kurram Valley by the British.

Another case which affected the British relations with Afghanistan was the Indian Government's belief that the Amir was intriguing against them with the Shinwari, Afridi and Orakzai clans in the Khyber region. By the Treaty of Gandamak the Government of India retained in its own hands the control of the Khyber and Michni Passes, which lay between the Peshawar and Jalalabad districts, and of all relations with the independent tribes of the territory directly connect-

45 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, April 1889, Nos 17-24, No. 22

46 *Ibid*

47 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Aug 1892 Nos 468-572, No 571.

48 *Ibid*.

ed with those passes. In fact, they claimed jurisdiction over all the tribes who were connected with those passes,and were in receipt of allowances for their protection. However, the dispute between the two Governments was caused by the Amir's desire to have close relations with the people living at Darband To the Commissioner and Superintendent of Peshawar Division, it appeared that Darband was not connected with those passes, and there seemed to be no reason why the poeple living there should not comply with the summons of the Kabul Government.[49] But according to the Political Officer, Khyber, Darband was a village of the Loargi Shinwaris inhabited by the Pasit Khel section, whose residents shared with their other bretheren in the Khyber allowances, and were under British political management.[50] Thus he regarded the Darband people as subject to the political influence of the Indian Government, and felt that if the Amir's officials had any claims against them, they should represent the matter to the British Political Officer, and not refer to the people, who were debarred by their agreement with the British to listen to Afghan officials.[51] Therefore they viewed with dissatisfaction the proceedings of Kabul Khasadars in Darband, and the other previous cases of interference by the Amir's officials with the Shinwaris of that place.[52] In view of this state of affairs there the Amir was informed that the residents of Darband were under the political management of the Government of India; and that they had made representations regarding interference with them by the servants of the Amir about which a letter had been directed to Ghulam Haidar Khan, the Afghan Commander-in-Chief in Jalalabad.[53] However, Abdur Rahman intimated the Commissioner and Superintendent of Peshawar division, that the water which came from Shikarghalai, and which was called by two names, viz., Barik-ab and *Narri Obak*, was the boundary line between the British territories and those of the Government of Afghanistan. He regarded all lands, habitations, ruins, forts, hillocks, mounds and posts situated on that side of the *Narri Obak* as belonging to him. According to him Darband was situated on that side of Narri Obak and much below

49. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Frontier, A. June 1890, Nos. 1-63, No. 7.
50. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Frontier, A. June 1890, Nos. 1-63, No. 10.
51. *Ibid*
52. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Frontier, A June 1890, Nos. 1-63, No. 1.
53. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Frontier, A June 1890, Nos. 1-63, No. 46,

Shikarghalai, and he considered it as included in the territory of Afghanistan.[54]

Futher, regarding the outrage committed by the Mohmands the Amir wrote that it was caused by the advance of the working parties of the Indian Government, employed on the new road the construction of which not only the residents of Afghanistan living there, but all generally, resented. Since the British officers had drawn lines for the new road, the people of Afghanistan felt apprehensive and it resulted in violence. The Amir protested that if it was the intention to prevent recurrence of such outrages, the projection of the line of the road must stop and it should not be drawn even one pace into the limits of Afghanistan.[55] In fact, the Government of India were trying to make a survey of the right bank of the Kabul river from Peshawar to Dhakka for ascertaining the feasibility or otherwise of constructing a railway along this route. Besides, they wanted to select the best alignment irrespective of the fact whether it kept altogether on one (the right) bank of the river or both.[56] The survey of the Kabul river from Peshawar to Dhakka led to opposition on the part of certain sections of the Mohamand tribes, and the Indian Government believed that the Mohamand outrage had been possible only with connivance or active insinuation of the Afghan Commander-in-Chief.[57]

However, regarding Darband the Indian Government authorised the Commissioner of Peshawar to inform the Afghan authorities that if they had any doubts about the limits of these tribes, the best course would be, for the British and Afghan frontier officers, to meet and settle the matter in a friendly and amicable way after visiting the localities in dispute.[58] "Meanwhile, without any desire to encroach on Afghan territory, the British frontier authorities must continue to exercise jurisdiction over Darband in accordance with the practice of the last ten years."[59]

Besides, the Government of India suspected that the Amir was receiving deputations from the Afridis and Orakzais, and was ende-

54 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Frontier, A. June 1890, Nos 1-63, No. 54.
55. *Ibid*
56 *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Frontier, A. Feb. 1890, Nos. 9-23, No. 22.
57. *Foreign Dept. Progs* Frontier, A. July 1890, Nos 1-9, No 1.
58 *Foreign Dept. Progs* Frontier, A. Jan. 1891, Nos 1-58, No, 58.
59 *Ibid.*

avouring to bring those tribes under his supremacy. Therefore, concerning Orakzais and Afridis, the Viceroy warned him distinctly that the Indian Government would regard with displeasure any attempt on his part to constitute himself the ruler of those tribes, or any attempt on the part of his officials to tamper with the allegiance of the tribesmen.[60] The Indian Government regarded the Afridis as independent and could not permit the Afghan ruler to interfere with them. However, Abdur Rahman informed the Governor-General that he had never desired and he did not desire to bring the Orakzais and Afridis under his control.[61] Nevertheless, the British did not cease to entertain the feeling that the Amir was indulging in intrigues with the Khyber tribes, and was making efforts to win over Mullas and influential men of the Afridi country. The Indian Government was also not prepared to tolerate Abdur Rahman's interference with the Afridis which might otherwise constitute a serious threat to their position because the Afridi levies guarded the Khyber Pass. Further, when Amin Khan, an Afridi headman, whose allowance had been reduced by the British, started giving trouble and threatened to block the mouth of Khyber, they suspected that the Amir had instigated him, although they were not certain about it.[62]

Besides, the Indo-Afghan boundary dispute also centered round Chageh, a point thirty miles on the Baluchistan side of the Lut-strip of desert known as the Lut, which lay to the south of the Helmund, and formed the natural boundary between North-Western Baluchistan and Amir's dominions.[63] The Government of India regarded Chageh as belonging to the desert state of Kharan which owed allegiance to the Ruler of Kalat, in friendly subordinate alliance with the British. But the Afghan ruler had occupied Chageh in 1886, and refused to evacuate it because he believed that the place was situated within the limits of Afghanistan.

Further, the Amir's inability to accept Lord Lansdowne's invitation to visit India in 1890, had given umbrage to the Governor-General, in spite of the fact that the Afghan ruler had excused himself on the ground of ill-health and the unsettled state of his country.

60. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Sept. 1892, Nos. 498-627, Nos. 607.
61. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Sept. 1892, Nos. 498-627, No. 612.
62. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Sept. 1892. No. 498-627, No. 546.
63. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Aug. 1892, No. 573-7, No. 575.

[64] Morever, Lansdowne had intended to send a mission to Kabul but his design had been frustrated on account of Sardar Ishak Khan's revolt in Turkestan Therefore, the Viceroy once again broached the question of sending a British Mission to Amir for discussing matters affecting the two Governments. The Amir informed the Governor-General that in his view it would be of utmost benefit that the British Mission should visit him at Kabul about the beginning of the Naoroz, so that doubts and anxieties of the Afghan people might be wholly removed, and the demarcation of the limits between the two states might be easily carried out. [65] The Indian Government requested the Amir to send a clear statement of the special questions which he desired to dispose of, and he was also required to mention the places at which he wished for a delimitation of the frontier, and the tribes and tracts which he regarded as properly included within the Afghan territory [66] Further, they wrote that it would not be possible for them to send their officials to Kabul so early as the Naoroz; and that they could not give those officers the authority to represent the views of the Government of India, unless that Government had had the opportunity of knowing on what subjects opinions would be asked for. [67] In view of this, Amir Abdur Rahman informed them that the Mission should be sent to Kabul soon, because the limits between the territories of Afghanistan and India, extending from the borders of the Kabul river at the Jalalabad frontier, to the frontiers of Seistan, were not known, and therefore, should be investigated thoroughly by the officers of both sides [68] However, it seems that the forward policy followed by the Indian Government made the Ruler of Afghanistan suspect the integrity of the British and the disinterestedness of the steps which they had taken. Therefore, he repeatedly requested them to send a mission to him for explaining matters and reassuring his countrymen by demarcating the Indo-Afghan frontier. But Lansdowne once again informed the Amir that if the Kabul ruler could come to India, he would be very happy to meet him, because then they could without delay make satisfactory arrangements for the measures to be taken for the demarcation of the frontier, and afterwards discuss any

64 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F, Jan. 1891, No 90 4, No 90
65 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F, March 1891, Nos 149-52, No 149
66 *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., March 1891, Nos 149-52, No. 150.
67 *Ibid*
68 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F, July 1891, Nos. 201-9, No. 202

matters which they might desire to dispose of.[69] But if a British officer were sent to Kabul he would have to report to the Government of India before any action was taken,[70] and it would take much time before a settlement was arrived at.

However, all this delay and procrastination gave the Amir the idea that the Government of India did not understand him, and neglected his interests. Therefore, he came to the conclusion that the affairs of his country would never be settled unless he saw the Queen and the Ministers in England.[71] He was sure that he could not get satisfaction in India, hence it was his desire to go to London.[72] Moreover, he wanted to avoid the displeasure of the Indian Government, for not accepting their invitation to visit India, and wished to place his difficulties directly before Her Majesty's Government.[73] He intended going to England with a view to settle the question of the boundaries of Afghanistan directly with the British Ministers.[74] Thus the Amir's idea was to have direct relations with England and short-circuit the Indian Government.

However, the Government of India was not prepared to permit the Afghan ruler to have direct relations with Her Majesty's Government; and the British Government also considered that the Amir's visit to England would be inexpedient in the existing state of affairs in Central Asia.[75] Besides, Lansdowne considered it undesirable to permit Abdur Rahman to go to England until he had come to some understanding with the Indian Government regarding the points at issue. The Amir's action would have dealt a severe blow to the authority of the Government of India, and therefore, they were not prepared to allow him either to go to England or to have direct communications with Her Majesty's Government. Lansdowne thought that the Afghan ruler's idea was to ignore the Government of India, and to place himself in direct communication with the India office, and this assumption intensified the tension.

The Indian Government took a stern attitude and, in July 1892, informed the Amir that they had determined that the settlement

69. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., July 1891, Nos. 201-9, No. 208
70. *Ibid.*
71. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Oct. 1891. Nos. 1-34, No. 15.
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec F., May 1893, Nos. 37-80. No. 62.
74. *Foreign Dept Progs.*, Sec. F., Oct. 1891, No 1—34, No. 15.
75. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., March 1892, Nos. 72-98, No. 88.

of his frontier should not be indefinitely delayed.[76] Therefore, they had decided to comply with his request and effect the settlement of the frontier during the coming winter, and had selected Lord Roberts for meeting him at Jalalabad not later than October.[77] They also wrote to Kabul ruler that the Indian Commander-in-Chief would not be able to go as far as Kabul, and that if they did not hear from him by 1 September that he was prepared to receive Lord Roberts they would assume that their offer was not accepted and it would be withdrawn.[78] But in the same letter they further informed the Amir that whether he accepted their offer or not, it would be necessary to settle the boundary of Afghanistan in order to avoid further trouble and misunderstanding. Besides, they said that they were giving Abdur Rahman an opportunity of having a voice in the settlement of those questions, and if he failed to avail it, they would be compelled to act for themselves, and to settle the frontier without consultation with him.

But the Amir informed the Viceroy that he could make no promise to receive a British mission due to Hazara rebellion and the unsettled state of affairs in Afghanistan.[79] However, the Government of India had no desire to postpone the mission on account of the Hazara rebellion.[80] Therefore, the Indian Government wanted that Her Majesty's Government should permit them to inform the Afghan ruler that he must arrange to receive Roberts at an early date, not later than the end of October 1892.[81] They also desired to inform the Amir that grave consequences would follow if they were forced to withdraw their offer to depute Roberts. The Lansdowne Government suspected that Abdur Rahman's occupation of the points in dispute would lead to serious trouble on the frontier, and they also felt that he was seeking to obtain an indefinite postponement of the mission by dilatory tactics.[82] In their opinion he could not be allowed to evade the mission, and also to hold the

76 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Sept 1892, Nos. 96 323, No 126
77 *Ibid*
78 *Ibid*
79 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Oct 1892, Nos 144-72, No 144
80 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F., Oct 1892, Nos 144-72, No 147.
81 *Ibid*
82 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Oct, 1892, Nos 144-72, No 150

points in dispute, using them as bases for further encroachments.[83] In case the Kabul ruler did not receive the mission, they were prepared to act by themselves regarding the settlement of the frontier, and to enforce the withdrawal of the Afghans from some or all the points in dispute.[84] But the Secretary of State for India, Lord Kimberley, informed the Governor-General that the importance of preventing their relations with the Amir from being strained to a point, which might lead to an actual rupture, was sufficient to outweigh any advantage gained by pushing forward the British control over the intermediate tribes.[85]

In the meantime the Indian Government detained the Amir's guns and warlike stores in India, in order to force him to agree to their proposal of receiving a British mission under Lord Roberts at Jalalabad But the Afghan ruler informed them once again, that due to Hazara rebellion he was not in a position to appoint any fixed time for entertaining a mission from India.[86] It is quite probable that Abdur Rahman was unwilling to meet Roberts because he was an advocate of forward policy; and the Amir felt that he was the cause of the steady advance of the British influence towards the frontiers of Afghanistan. Besides, perhaps the Amir believed that the British would discuss the subject of the appointment of English officers on the Russo-Afghan frontier; extension of railway to Kandahar; establishment of telegraph office at Kabul; freedom in trade and the reduction of duties; and the appointment of newswriters at Maimena, Mazar-i-Sharif and Faizabad.[87] He felt that these demands were dangerous and disadvantageous for his country, and that Lord Roberts would coerce him to concede them, and it would sound the death-knell of Afghanistan's independence. Moreover, he regarded the tone of the Viceroy's letters specially those advising him in the matters of internal policy as dictatorial, and he refused to submit.[88] Besides, he had refused to visit India because he thought that he would lose his honour by frequently coming to

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83. *Ibid.*
84. *Ibid.*
85. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F, April 1893, Nos. 69-71, No 70.
86. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., April. 1893, Nos. 67-91, No. 67.
87. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Feb 1893, Nos. 58-61, No. 59.
88. Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan, II, *op cit*, 135.

this country and meeting the Governor-General [89] Further, had the Viceroy gone to Afghanistan at his request, the Amir would have come to India, because he wished to be put on an equal footing with the Shah of Persia,[90] and to be treated as an independent-ally and not as a vassal or a subordinate ruler of a Native State.

However, in view of the difficulties in Afghanistan and the postponement of the Mission the Viceroy deemed it desirable that Lord Frederick Roberts should retain his appointment in India till the end of 1893.[91] But the Commander-in-Chief was granted extension of service only till March 1893.[92] Therefore, the Indian Government once again asked the Amir to fix a date not later than the middle of March 1893, for meeting the Indian Commander-in-Chief at Jalalabad [93] Abdur Rahman expressed his inability to do so on the ground that during winter days the roads were closed by snow, and due to cold the representatives of the tribesmen could not come together, and also because he was ill and confined to bed.[94] However, the Amir's reply to the Viceroy's letter was brought down by Mr. Pyne, the English Superintendent of the Amir's workshops, who reached Calcutta on 12 March—a date considerably beyond the period mentioned to the Afghan ruler within which it was necessary for the Government of India to know if the meeting was to take place. Therefore, the proposal to depute Roberts to meet the Amir at Jalalabad fell to the ground

Another important cause of misunderstanding and estrangement between the two Governments was the question of the extension of Indian Railway beyond Chaman Fort. The Government of India were keen to carry out defence schemes, which would strengthen their north-western frontier against Russia and safeguard the possible avenues of Russian approach towards India. Russia could approach the British Indian Empire through Kashmir on the north, through Afghanistan on the north-west, and through Persia on the west. Lord Dufferin's policy with regard to frontier railway

89 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F., April 1893, Nos. 67-91, No 68.

90 *Ibid*

91 *Lansdowne Papers 1892*, Telegram to Secretary of State for India, Nos. 530 and 627.

92 *Lansdowne Papers 1892*, Telegram from Secretary of State for India, No 74

93 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F, April 1893, Nos 67-91, No. 75.

94 *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec F., April 1893, Nos. 67-91, No 84.

lines was intended to provide facilities to the Brittsh for pushing their railways on to Kandahar at any moment, should necessity require it.[95] Before Lord Dufferin left India the means of communication had been considerably improved by the construction of the Sind-Pishin Railway (Hurnai Railway route), which was opened to passenger traffic in 1887, and which passed through the Amran Range by means of a tunnel The Bolan line was also carried into Quetta in the spring of 1887. Besides, the Sind-Sagar Railway; the road from Dera Ghazi Khan to Pishin, and that from Dera Ismail Khan to Khushalgar; the road to Kashmir, and the bridge over Chenab at Sher Shah and that over Sutlej at Ferozepur were other measures that were adopted to strengthen the Indian frontier against Russian aggression.

The increasing Russian activities in Central Asia made the Lansdowne Government apprehend encroachments from St. Petersburg in Herat and Afghan Turkestan. Therefore, the Government of India wanted to extend their influence over the frontier tribes, and improve and secure the means of transport and communication. This would enable them to advance easily and smoothly into Afghanistan in an emergency, and forestall Russia there. The scheme of extending the Indian Railway beyond Chaman Fort and constructing the New Chaman Railway station was also a part of the measures to foil the designs of St. Petersburg Government in Afghanistan. From New Chaman the British could easily move forward to Kandahar, Ghazni and Kabul, and deal a severe blow to Russian aggression. But the completion of the Khojak Tunnel, the extension of Indian Railway down the slope of the Khwaja Amran to New Chaman, and the transfer of railway material to the latter place made the Amir apprehensive of British designs towards Afghanistan.

There was a dispute regarding the boundaries of India and Afghanistan in the region of Chaman also. The boundary in that neighbourhood had never been precisely demarcated. The Afghans regarded the fort of Chaman as marking the boundary between Kandahar and the Pishin districts,[96] while Lord Dufferin was of opinion that the British territory extended at least as far as the point

95 *Dufferin Papers 1887*, Letter from Secretary of State to Dufferin, No. 20, 20 May 1887.

96 *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., May 1889, Nos. 324-80, No. 357.

where the road to Kandahar became level, that point being about nine miles distant from the fort Moreover, Lansdowne informed the Amir that the construction of the terminus station at the foot of the western slope of the Khojak range would be advantageous to the Afghans from commercial and military point of view. Besides, the Government of India held the view that the correspondence which took place in 1881, at the time when they agreed to hand over the Kandahar Province to Abdur Rahman, established the fact that the districts evacuated by them and transferred to him, were those which lay beyond the slopes of the Amran range, and that no part of those slopes themselves was so transferred The India Government regarded Gatai as the last military post whithin Afghan territory and Chaman as the last military post within British territory.[97] They informed the Amir that they could not admit that their right to land lying beyond the Chaman Fort, where they wanted to construct the New Chaman Railway Station, was doubtful, and therefore, they had ordered their officers to go on with the work[98] The Indian Government regarded the construction of the railway as a work of imperial defence, and they also felt assured that "it would be impossible to construct a terminal station, or to store the Kandahar reserve of material, at Chaman itself," and besides, it was "not practicable to carry out the engineering business of the tunnel project itself, with the end of the line resting on a steep slope'[99] On the basis of these practical and political considerations they were not prepared to withdraw from the position they had already taken up, and therefore, they decided to proceed with the work, and informed the Amir that they were doing so In view of this, it was impossible for them to admit Abdur Rahman's contention that Afghan territory extended up to the walls of Chaman fort But that attitude of the Indian Government gave the Amir an impression that they intended to seize Kandahar and bring their railway upto that place, and deal a severe blow to his country's independence. However, in spite of Abdur Rahman's arguments, protests and objections, the Government of India satisfactorily completed the construction of New Chaman Railway station. This annoyed the Kabul ruler to a considerable extent, and he decided to boycott the new railway station.

97 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, May 1889, Nos 324-80, No 376
98 *Ibid*
99 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, May 1889, Nos 324-80, No 379

Besides, the trade relations between India and Afghanistan also became strained. The Amir wanted to improve the financial resources of his country by imposing so-called heavy duties and making certain articles of trade a government monopoly. The Indian Government regarded these heavy duties and the restrictions caused by government monopolies as seriously affecting trade between the two countries The Government of India regarded these restrictions enforced by the Afghan ruler as not only injurious to trade, but also inconsistent with the friendly relations subsisting between the two Governments.[100] Therefore, the Indian Government desired that when Lord Roberts went to see Abdur Rahman, he should endeavour, should the circumstances seem favourable to prevail on the Afghan ruler to enter into negotiations for a trade convention.[101] But due to Amir's inability to recieve the Roberts Mission the plans for concluding a trade convention also fell through.

In the ultimate analysis we find that as far back as 16 August 1892, the Government of India believed that the Amir had not proved a good neighbour and trustworthy ally. They assumed that Afghanistan's diplomatic relations with the Indian Government were not satisfactory; and the British representative at the Amir's Court had not been shown respect due to the representative of a power that was friendly to Afghanistan. Besides, the Government of India disliked Amir Abdur Rahman's systematic oppression and cruelty towards his subjects. They viewed with disfavour the Amir's policy of establishing numerous monopolies in his own interest, and imposing heavy taxes on traders.[102] Lansdowne believed that the Afghan ruler had failed to act up to his engagement of 1880, and failed to treat the Indian Government with the confidence and good-will which, they had a right to expect from him, because they were his supporters and friends. Amir's steady refusal, in spite of repeated requests by the Indian Government, to permit British officers to be stationed on his northern frontier was also a cause of irritation to them. Lansdowne's attitude towards Afghanistan was further conditioned by his belief that the Kabul ruler had put many difficulties in the way of British officers, and had treated them with suspicion-while a British Boundary Commission had gone to settle in commu-

100. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec F , May 1893, Nos. 425-54. No 433.
101. *Ibid.*
102. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., July to Dec. 1892, Vol VI, No. 15·

nication with St. Petersburg the frontier between the Hari-Rud and the Oxus. He resented the Amir's persistent unfriendliness, jealousy, and a general disregard of his advice, and the Afghan ruler's intrigues in Bajaur, Swat, Afridi, Turi and Waziri country.[103] In short, the Amir's determination to assert his complete independence, and to hold aloof from the British, and Government of India's active frontier policy created misunderstandings between the two Governments, and brought about a situation, not really explosive, but quite tense However, the increasing Russian activities in the region of the Pamirs, and the threat to Indo-Afghan frontiers brought the two Governments nearer to each other in the face of a common danger. Pyne's visit to the Viceroy, and the subsequent acceptance by the Amir to receive the Durand Mission paved the way for the removal of mutual mistrust and misunderstanding which had clouded the relations of the two Governments during this period, and helped to restore the old ties of friendship.

103. *Ibid*

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THE SETTLEMENT OF AFGHANISTAN'S NORTH-EASTERN BOUNDARY AND THE DURAND MISSION

At the time when the Commission for delimitation of Afghanistan's north-western boundary was appointed, the Amir had requested the Government of India that his north-eastern frontier should also be similarly demarcated. But Her Majesty's Government did not think it desirable then to approach the Russian Government on this subject, specially at a time when the relations between the two were apparently friendly; and they let the matter drop. Their hesitation kept the settement of Afghanistan's north-eastern frontier in abeyance till the time that the increasing Russian activity in that region caused grave concern and compelled the British Government to come to an understanding with the Czar's Government regarding the limits of Russian sphere of influence in that direction.

The increasing intervention by Russia in the region of the Pamirs was a new source of anxiety to the British and Indian Governments. They lacked knowledge of the geographical complexion of the Sino-Afghan frontier in that region; all that they were aware of was the fact that both Afghanistan and China "laid claim to be in possession of certain tracts in or near the Pamirs....."[1] They were, however, of the view that, as a matter of policy, they should, on the one hand, encourage the Chinese to assert their claim, and on the other, safeguard the interests of the Kabul ruler, so that the entire area might be brought under definite occupation by one or the other

1. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., March 1891, Nos. 123-48, No 147.

of these two powers, and thereby leave little scope for encroachment by any third party.[2] They desired that no gap should be left between the possessions of Afghanistan and China in that zone, because of their apprehension that otherwise Russia would fill the vacuum and thereby threaten both the Afghan and Indian frontiers. The Government of India wished to encourage China to occupy territory in the Pamirs upto the Russian and Afghan boundaries; but in this they wanted to keep England out of the picture so as to avoid Afghan jealousy or Russian opposition.[3] Therefore, Captain F.E. Younghusband, 'who was on special duty in the Intelligence Department" of the Government of India, and "had for some time past been engaged in exploring the country to the north of the Himalayas",[4] was sent to settle, as far as it could be settled on the spot, the Pamir frontier question, because the Indian Government was keen to prevent Russian infiltration in that area, whether territorial or political, in time of peace.[5] Younghusband spent some time in Kashgar and endeavoured to carry out the instructions of the Government of India without unduly arousing the suspicions, or hurting the feelings of the Russians, and mentioned the subject to the Chinese on two occasions.[6] At Kashgar Younghusband was joined by Davison an adventurous junior officer.[7] However, Russians suspected that Younghusband was trying to bring the Afghans and the Chinese closer.[8] In July 1891, Younghusband and Davison "started to return to India by way of the Pamirs and Gilgit."[9] At Bulun-Kul Lake the two officers separated, and Davison travelled towards the Alichur Pamir.[10] But Younghusband continued his journey through Tash-Kurgan and the Tagh-dumbash Pamir to the village of Bozai Gumbaz in the Wakhan Valley.[11] The Government of St. Petersburg seemed determined not only to assert its right to the Pamirs, but also to encroach upon what was regarded as Afghan territory, and it went

2 *Ibid*
3 *Ibid*
4 'An Indian Officer', *Russia's March Towards India* (London 1894) II, 259
5 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Sept 1891, Nos 280-319, No 299.
6 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Sept 1891, Nos. 280-319, No. 287
7 An Indian Officer', *op cit*, 259
8 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Sept 1891, Nos. 280-319, No. 287.
9 'An Indian Officer, *op cit*, 259
10 *Ibid*
11 *Ibid*

so far as to forcibly expel Younghusband from Wakhan.[12] Lieutenant Davison was also arrested by the Russians in the Alichur Pamir, but later on he was set free.[13] He proceeded towards Kashgaria and rejoined Younghusband on the Tagh-dum-bash Pamir on 4 October 1891.[14] Colonel Yonoff, the head of the Russian squadron patrolling the Pamirs, told Captain Younghusband that he was responsible for provoking Russia into action[15] because of the strong suspicion that Younghusband was acting against Russian interest. In view of Russia's aggressive and hostile attitude, Younghusband suspected that she would absorb all the country upto the Hindukush in her dominions, if the Amir presisted in excluding British from that region. However, he strongly felt that the danger might be averted if the British and the Afghans could act in unison.[16] Besides, he was of the opinion that, as long as the Russian force remained on the Alai there was nothing to be done on the spot.[17] Hence he retired into Afghan territory and then returned to India. Moreover, the Pamir region abounded in open valleys, and neither the Afghans nor the Chinese had the resources enough to maintain a force there sufficient to oppose the Russians successfully.[18] This may be the reason behind the view entertained by the Government of India that the Pamirs cannot be held by force against Russia. Further, Younghusband also realised that Russia had, in time of peace, fortified her position, and on the spot the British were then powerless to offer successful resistance.[19]

In the meantime the Russians were engaged on a reconnaissance of the country near the Hindukush passes. The British and Indian Governments viewed with horror the prospect of Russia gaining a footing on the southern slopes of the Hindukush. But in 1891 Russia laid claim to the whole of Roshan and Shighnan, and also posed the view that the northern boundary of Afghanistan ran straight from Lake Victoria to the junction of the Kokcha river with the Oxus, thereby

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12 *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Sept. 1891, Nos 280-319, No . 287
13. 'An Indian Officer', *op. cit* , 260.
14. *Ibid*
15. *Foreign Dept. Progs* , Sec. F , Sept 1891, Nos. 280-319, No. 287
16. *Ibid*,
17. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Sept. 1891, Nos. 280-319, No. 299.
18. *Ibid* ,
19 *Ibid*.

claiming further Badakhshan north of Faizabad.[20] The Government of India contested this new claim Hence Her Majesty's Government decided to protest against the recent Russian movements in the Pamirs to the Government at St. Petersburg, as such action was so singularly at variance with the assurances recieved from M. de Giers earlier Lord Salisbury expressed his resentment at the treatment meted out to a British officer, and desired that an enquiry would be made, and proper reparation offered for the affront to Younghusband [21] The British remonstrances led ultimately to an expression of regret by the Russian Government, which condemned the action of Yonoff regarding the expulsion of two British officers,[22] Younghusband and Davison, as unwarranted. Besides, the British *Charge d' Affaires* at St Petersburg was instructed to "remind the Russian Government that by Prince Gortschakoff's note to Baron Brunno of 19 January 1873, Badakhshan and Wakhan were recognised as belonging to Afghanistan, and that Her Majesty's Government can admit no decision affecting the frontier of that state without previous discussion and agreement "[23] For Colonel Yonoff had told Younghusband that he had been ordered by the Governor-General of Turkestan to annex the Pamirs, and that the Russians meant to claim Roshan, Shighnan, and Cis-Oxus Darwaz, as belonging to them.[24] According to Yonoff the Russians based their claims to the Pamirs on the ground that the people living there came from Alai ; and that they were formerly paying tribute to Khokand ; and that therefore, as Khokand now belonged to Russia, the Pamirs must also belong to her [25]

Meanwhile the Russians had taken the Alichur, Rang Kul, Great and little Pamirs, and there was a possibility that they might claim Tagh-dum-bash Pamir also [26] In view of these developments the Indian Government wanted that Macartney, a British officer, should remain at or somewhere near Kashgar or Yarkand, and

20 *Foreign Dept Progs* , Sec F , Sept 1891, Nos. 72-126, No 85

21 *Foreign Dept Progs* , Sec F , Sept 1891, Nos 280-319, No. 284

22 *Lansdowne Papers, Confidential Telegrams to and from the Secretary of State for India—Vols. III & IV*, 1892, No 100, Telegram from the Secretary of State to Viceroy, 24 February 1892.

23 *Foreign Dept Progs* , Sec, F , Sept 1891, Nos 280-319, No. 284

24 *Foreign Dept Progs* , Sec F. Sept 1891, Nos. 72-126, No. 109.

25 *Ibid*

26 *Foreign Dept Progs* , Sec F , Sept. 1891, Nos 280-319, K W. No. 3, 24.

should not lose touch with the Chinese authorities at this juncture, because it was important for them to learn what steps China proposed to take about the Russian invasion of the regions which had been regarded hitherto, by both the Chinese and the British, as belonging to China.[27] The Government of India was keen that China should come forward and lay claim to the regions which had been the field of recent Russian activities, and take steps to frustrate the designs of Russia in that area. Besides, Lord Roberts was strongly in favour of maintaining the integrity of the Northern provinces of Afghanistan, and the independence of Trans-Oxus Roshan, Shighnan, and that portion of the Alichur Pamir, which did not belong to China.[28]

The Indian Government was keen to have Amir's active co-operation against Russia, and therefore, pointed out to him how very desirable it was, while the Russians were still moving about in the country south of Alai, and showing activity generally on the borders of Afghanistan, that direct communications should be established between the British Agency at Gilgit and Amir's Governor of Badakhshan.[29] They also informed him that during winter atleast a British officer would be stationed at Chitral itself, and several more, with a detachment of Indian troops, would join Colonel Durand in Gilgit.[30] However, the British desire regarding direct communications between Gilgit and Badakhshan remained unfulfilled perhaps because of strained Indo-Afghan relations at the moment.

The situation in the Pamirs was further complicated by a Sino-Afghan dispute relating to a place called Somatash. The Afghans regarded it as a part of their own territory and the Amir wrote to the Government of India that the Chinese had no right to meddle with that place.[31] The Afghan ruler attributed the Russian and Chinese encroachments into his territories to the delay on the part of the British in dealing with the question of the delimitation of his frontier in that quarter. Abdur Rahman had also complained that his frontier

27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Sept. 1891, Nos. 280-319, No. 302.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Dec. 1891, Nos. 206-91, No. 229.

had not been defined in that direction, and had addressed a letter on the subject asking for a map showing the frontier.[32] Undoubtedly, the Indian Government had been quite definite that Russia must in any case be kept to the north of Hindukush and as far north as possible. They had also made no secret of their opposition to any infiltration by the Russians into the valley of Yarkand river from which several easy passes led into Kanjut, but they were doubtful whether a delimitation of the boundaries to secure these objectives would be advantageous to them On the one hand, the Government of India felt that if the boudaries were not delimited and vigorous steps were not taken to counteract Russian encroachments on the Pamirs, they would find the Russians well established on the Hindukush and probably in the valley of the Yarkand river. That would have left the frontier on the side of Afghanistan absolutely undefined, thus creating a constant source of complaints and interference by Russia. On the other hand, the Government of India was not sure if the negotiations on the basis of the strict letter of the Agreement of 1873, would not lead ultimately to the evacuation of Roshan and Shighnan, and Somatash on Alichur Pamir by the Afghans which would naturally offend the Amir Besides, the Agreement of 1873 was of no help in defining the boundary to the east of the Wood's Lake, and there was no effective Afghan or Chinese occupation there. Moreover, unless the Chinese joined in the delimitation the eastward boundary could not be fixed, and there would still be danger of the Russians pushing down the valley of Yarkand river in which there was much cultivable land The Government of India also feared that a definite delimitation of the frontier might not be really satisfactory as it might help to bring the Russians into the Hunza and Yasin passes and possibly into the Yarkand valley, and give to Russia, at the expense of the Chinese and the Afghans, some territory where the Russians might establish their settlements within a striking distance of Hunza and Chitral. The Government of India felt that delimitation would be desirable only if the British Government could induce the Russians to accept a line restricting their advace eastward and keeping them to the north of the Pamirs and leaving Roshan and Shighnan, or perhaps even Shughnan alone, to the Afghans; and they were also keen that China should be a party to the proceedings. In the view of the Government

32 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F., Dec 1891, Nos. 206 91, No. 263.

of India any demarcation of boundaries would be undesirable if it failed to define the Russo-Chinese frontier also, and if it failed to prevent Russia from occupying Roshan and Shighnan.[33]

However, in that undetermined state of the frontiers and lack of geographical knowledge, the Afghans had taken Somatash from the Chinese but later on there was a clash between them and the Russians under Yonoff on 24 July 1893, in the Alichur Pamir in which the Afghans were defeated. This naturally caused serious umbrage to Amir Abdur Rahman but the Government of India tried to soothe him by impressing upon him that, while Her Majesty's Government were trying to arrange matters by negotiations in Europe, he should, as far as possible, avoid taking any action likely to prejudice a settlement. The Viceroy desired to assure the Amir that he would not regard lightly the incident at Somatash and in that strain he had represented the matter to Her Majesty's Government.[34] The British Government also desired Lord Lansdowne to assure the Afghan ruler that they were seized of the question of settlement of the north-eastern frontier of Afghanistan and that they were in communication with the Russian Government with that object.[35] Nevertheless the Russian activities in that quarter had greatly agitated the Amir who wanted to evacuate the eastern portion of Wakhan. But the Government of India did not countenance this move, but, as mentioned earlier, warned the Afghan ruler against occupying any fresh advance posts, such as Somatash.[36] At the same time they were keen to despatch Lord Roberts, to meet the Amir to settle the points in disput between him and India, whom the Amir did not want to receive. The Russian pressure on the north-eastern frontier of Afghanistan, however, helped the Government of India and the Amir, to patch up their differences in the face of a serious and common danger. The Russian threat softend Abdur Rahman's attitude towards the Government of India; and it also made the Indian Government adopt a discreet and conciliatory policy towards the Amir of Kabul. Thus Russia's advance in the region of the Pamirs formed the basis of Indo-Afghan Agreement, which once again brought the two Governments closer together.

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33. *Ibid.*

34. *Foreign Dept Progs.*, Sec. F., Sept. 1892, Nos. 738-872, No. 846.

35. *Foreign Dept Progs.*, Sec. F., Oct. 1892, Nos. 565-640, No. 606.

The Amir sent Mr. Pyne, the English superintendent of his workshops,to India with two letters in 1893, perhaps with the intention of making a tentative approach for relieving the tension between the Governments of India and Afghanistan. Amir Abdur Rahman's important letter bore on the subject of Lord Roberts' Mission to Afghanistan, which he was still unable to receive due to various reasons It also contained his request that the orders detaining his munitions of war might be rescinded Pyne's visit to India in 1893 was, therefore, successful in the sense that he could press the Government of India to release a part of Amir's military stores detained here, in order that on his return to Kabul, he might be able to convince the Afghan ruler of Indian Government's goodwill towards Afghanistan, and in order that his own hands might be strengthened for making an agreement between the two countries possible. The Indian Government acceded to Mr Pyne's request, and it was prepared to release the guns and the remainder of the military stores, provided the results of his negotiations proved satisfactory.[37] Pyne was able to satisfy the Amir to some extent, regarding the motives and intentions of the Government of India towards Afghanistan The Indian Government was also in a position to avail this opportunity of establishing friendly relations and wrote that if the Afghan ruler agreed the Viceroy would send to Kabul without delay an officer charged with the duty of explaining exactly to His Highness the claims which had been made by Russia with regard to certain territories lying beyond the Oxus, and to ascertain His Highness's views.[38] Amir Abdur Rahman was also informed that the officer selected would take with him no military escort, and would be accompanied only by three or four British officers The Amir was expected to make all necessary arrangements for the protection of the party, and was asked to send a suitable escort to meet it at Lundi Khana. The Government of India assured the Afghan ruler that his boundary on the upper Oxus would be delimited and would be as secure as that on the lower Oxus

The Amir in his letter of 1 August 1893, expressed his willingness to recieve a British officer and to discuss the question at issue.[39]

36 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F., Dec 1892, Nos 337-92, No. 390
37 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F., June 1893, Nos. 312-14, No. 314
38 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F., Aug 1893, No 274-332, No. 296
39 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Jan 1894, Nos 193-217, No 206

The Afghan ruler, however, desired that some able and well-known officer of India, who might have the confidence of the Viceroy, should be sent to him. Besides, that officer should have knowledge of the internal matters of the Government of India and should have authority to carry on discussion, if required, on diverse matters.[40] Thereupon, he was informed by the Governor-General that Sir M. Durand had been selected for the job, and on 21 August the Amir replied that he would be glad to meet and confer with him[41].

In the meantime the negotiations were continued on the subject of the Pamirs between the Governments of St Petersburg and London. Lord Rosebery had asserted that the land on this side of the Oxus did not belong to Russia, but was a matter for discussion and decision.[42] He had contended that, even if the line of 1873 was literally accepted, country beyond Oxus did not thereby fall to Russia.[43] It seems that the British Government wanted to follow the line that the Agreement of 1873 was meant to lay down the frontier of Afghanistan as it stood at that time, and was not meant to lay down a limit of Russian influence. The Government of India was also inclined to press for a division of so-called no-man's land between Bokhara and Oxus.[44] Therefore, the Earl of Rosebery informed Sir R. Morier, the British Ambassador, that the position which he should take up was to insist on Roshan and Shighnan being territories for division and not for Russian occupation. [45]. He was further informed that the point to which Indian Government attached great importance was the settlement of the boundary east of Lake Victoria, and his chief endeavour should be to obtain a line running eastward along the parallel of latitude of the Lake.[46] Perhaps the British believed that this would keep the two powers removed from too close a contact with each other, and it would also assure to them the control of the northern slopes of the Hindukush. Westward of Lake Victoria, Lord Rosebery thought it would be more difficult to deal with Russia because of the Agree-

40. *Foreign Dept Progs.*, Sec. F., Aug. 1893. Nos. 274-332, No. 325.
41. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec F., Jan. 1894. Nos. 193-217, No. 206.
42. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., July. 1893, Nos 493-570, No. 549.
43. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., July 1893, Nos. 493-570, No. 550
44. *Ibid.*
45. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Aug. 1893, Nos. 274-332, No. 311.
46. *Ibid.*

ment of 1872-73, which was now regarded as an embarrassment for the British Lord Rosebery felt that the British object was negative rather than positive because the further Russia was kept north of the Oxus without endangering the line east of Lake Victoria, the better it would be for both the countries.[47] The British Government was trying its best to obtain a settlement by diplomatic action and was not prepared to "embark in a serious quarrel with Russia on account of Roshan and Sighnan, or the Pamirs"[48]

The Secretary of State informed the Government of India on 13 July 1893, that the British Government would not be prepared to insist, at whatever cost, upon the division of the land in question beyond the Oxus,[49] because they were averse to risk rupture with Russia He further wrote that Lord Rosebery would try to obtain a strip of Wakhan north of the Panja, and would keep the negotiations open as long as possible Her Majesty's Government was of the opinion that the time had come to prepare the Afghan ruler for the evacuation of Roshan and Shighnan because it would be better for him to evacuate of his own free-will than be turned out by a Russian expedition which might lead to bloodshed and create serious complications. The Viceroy was asked to induce the Amir to receive at once some officer, who would inform him of the course of negotiations with Russia. Her Majesty's Government was neither prepared to accept the responsibility to enforce the Amir's retirement from Trans-Oxus Roshan and Shighnan, nor ready to assist him in maintaining his occupation in opposition to the Agreement of 1873 The Government of India was asked to point to Abdur Rahman that the Russians were willing to give up Darwaz, and that the no man's land between Wakhan and the Chinese frontier might also be made over to the Amir, his boundary would then be fixed, and it would be as secure as that on the Lower Oxus The British Government was willing to make considerable concessions to the Amir elsewhere, if the Viceroy could secure his peaceful acquiescence to retire from Shighnan and Roshan.[50] This led to the appointment of the Durand Mission which succeeded in negotiating the requisite Agreement with the Amir of Afghanistan.

47. *Ibid*
48 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F, July. 1893, Nos 493-570, K.W No 4
49 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F., Aug. 1893, Nos 274-332, No 293
50 *Ibid*

Sir M. Durand's primary duty was to acquaint the Kabul ruler with the fact that the Czar's Government insisted on the literal fulfilment of the Agreement of 1872-73, which defined the north-eastern limits of Afghan territory, and in the circumstances the British Government did not consider it possible to resist the claim.[51] Durand was to explain to Abdur Rahman that this involved the Amir's withdrawal from Trans-Oxus Roshan and Shighnan; but at the same time the British representative was empowered to point out to him that the literal interpretation of that Agreement required ont only the evacuation of Trans-Oxus territory by the Afghan ruler, but also the surrender to Afghanistan of the portion of Cis-Oxus Darwaz at present held by the Amir of Bokhara. He was further to inform the Amir that the effect of his withdrawal would then be to give him a definite frontier on the north-east formed by the Upper Oxus, and that this part of his frontier would then be as secure as that formed by the Lower Oxus in the north-west. However, regarding this point Durand was warned that he must be careful on no account to extend the commitments of the Government of India beyond those made in 1880.[52]

In the second place, Durand was told that the Amir might take the opportunity of his presence in Kabul to discuss with him other questions about which His Highness had at various times had some differences of opinion with the Indian Government. If so, Durand might agree to discuss these questions, and make efforts to come to a friendly understanding in respect of them. It appeared to the Government of India that the Amir's attitude was more friendly at this stage than it had been for some time, and therefore it attached great importance to the establishment of a thorough understanding with the Ruler of Afghanistan. Hence, Durand was authorised to make certain concessions to Abdur Rahman, if a thoroughly satisfactory understanding might be brought about. Besides, Durand was expected to reassure the Amir generally, and endeavour to remove from his mind any doubts which he might have entertained as to the intentions of the British Government in India. The Amir was to be convinced of the friendly intentions of the Government of

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51. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Jan. 1894, Nos. 193-217, No. 194.
52. *Ibid.*

India in the matter of the tunnel through the Khojak and the extension of the Railway line to New Chaman. He was also to be assured of the identity of interests between the two Governments, and of the increasing degree in which Afghanistan, which the British regarded as an outwork of their empire in India, had been threatened by the recent advances of Russia With this object Durand was to refer to the pledges already given to the Amir regarding the support the Government of India had undertaken to afford him in case of unprovoked external aggression It is clear from this that the Government of India was keen to conciliate Abdur Rahman, and for this purpose Durand was empowered to promise the Amir reasonable pecuniary compensation, if the Afghan ruler were to show that in case of the affair of railway to New Chaman, or in any other matter, his interests had been overlooked.[53] Sir M. Durand was to discuss with the Kabul ruler the whole question of the frontier settlement between India and Afghanistan indicating to him the views and purposes of the Government of India and finding out the Amir s intentions He was to explain to Abdur Rahman the necessity for the Indian Government to maintain direct relations with the independent border tribes lying along the frontier, more particularly the Waziris, the Afridis, and the people inhabiting Bajaur and Swat, whom the Amir had persistently endeavoured to bring under his influence He was, if possible, to induce the Amir to desist from any such course Besides, Durand was to induce the Afghan ruler to make no further advance up the Kunar river towards Chitral, and if possible, to bring about a more satisfactory understanding with regard to Kurram.

These were the main objects which Durand was expected to achieve, and, for bringing about a completely satisfactory settlement on this basis, he was empowered to make some concessions also The Government of India was prepared to recognize the occupation of Chageh by the Amir. They were willing to bring back the frontier on the Khwaja Amaran range from the lower slopes to the range towards the crest, except at one point where their railway line came down. They were prepared to assure the Amir that they would not build a fort at Wana in Waziristan, and, if the Kabul ruler undertook to abstain from interference with all other portions of Waziris-

53 *Ibid*

tan, Wana might even be left to him. Further, if the Amir undertook to refrain from interference in Swat and Bajaur, and from any advance up the Kunar valley, he might be allowed to retain Asmar. They were willing to increase the Amir's annual subsidy by six lakhs a year, as compensation in cases where he might seem entitled to or in return for an agreement to meet their wishes in important matters. Finally, they empowered Durand to inform Abdur Rahman that the existing prohibitions on the import of arms and ammunitions would be removed, and a grant of arms might under certain circumstances be made to him. Besides, he was also expected to make efforts to arrive at an understanding with the Amir regarding some minor matters.[54] Durand was to endeavour to induce Abdur Rahman to enter into negotiations for a trade convention, and to scrap the prohibitive restrictions imposed by him on trade. Durand was instructed to see that there was no recurrence of acts of oppression and cruelty on the part of the Afghan ruler. He was also desired to exert himself in the direction of improving, as far as possible, the position of the British Agent at Kabul. He was further commissioned to reassure the Amir that there was no danger to his security by the presence of Sardar Ayub Khan, and other Afghan Sardars in India. He was further to dissuade the Amir from relinquishing the eastern portion of Wakhan. Finally, if the Kabul ruler asked for the recognition of his heir apparent, Durand was to hear all that the Amir had to say and refer the matter to the Government of India.

Thus Durand's primary duty was to announce to the Amir that the British Government could not support him in the occupation of Trans-Oxus territories of Roshan and Shighnan. The Government of India was well aware of the fact that this announcement would be highly distasteful to Abdur Rahman, and therefore, Sir M. Durand was empowered to make considerable concessions on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, so as to facilitate Afghan ruler's peaceful retirement from those districts

However, the Government of India had given Durand a free hand in dealing with the Amir. Mr. Pyne's consistent efforts to lessen Abdur Rahman's suspicions, and to convince him of the goodwill of Her Majesty's Government had paved the way for this

54. *Ibid.*

mission The Durand Mission entered the Khyber on the morning of 18 September 1893. The members of the Mission were received at Lundi Khana by the Amir's Commander-in-Chief, General Ghulam Haider Khan, and from this moment, the relations between the two were most pleasant, and the Afghan officer made every endeavour to show that they were welcome guests[55] The Mission reached Kabul on 2 October and was received there with every honour on Thursday, 5 October The Kabul ruler was most friendly and cordial to each member of the Mission, whom he received in Durbar at his country house. The qualities of tact and patience on the part of Durand crowned the efforts of this Mission with success.

The Amir gave in with a fairly good grace and agreed to give up all districts held by him to the north of the Upper Oxus, on condition that he received in return all districts not now held by him to the south of this part of the river. Besides, the Afghan ruler did not give any indication whatsoever of any indifference to his obligations towards the British, and he accepted to follow the advice of the Government of India in matters affecting his relations with foreign powers Thus Durand was able to discharge his primary duty successfully, and in this he was greatly helped by Russian activities in Roshan[56] Durand had heard soon after he crossed the frontier that Captain Vanovsky, an officer of the Pamir force, had appeared in that district with an armed escort and demanded a passage through Roshan to the Yazgulam valley, claiming that he had been ordered to take the route by Kila Wamar. He was stopped by the Afghans who broke down a cliff galley over which the road lay Vanovsky found himself unable to advance and left that district by a route across the mountains, whereupon Colonel Yonoff himself marched into Roshan with reinforcements, and sent a threatening letter to the Afghan officer in charge of Shighnan However, Yonoff did not push forward being possibly stopped by orders from St Petersburg In the meantime one result of these Russian proceedings was that Durand was able to impress upon Abdur Rahman the inconvenience of his position beyond the Oxus, which exposed him to the constant threat of such incidents

After agreeing to relinquish the territories beyond the Oxus,

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55 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Jan 1894, Nos 193-217, No 194.
56 *Ibid*

the Amir asked Durand to give him a written guarantee that in future the Indian Government would support him against Russian aggression throughout the entire length of his northern frontier. With this object Durand wrote him a letter, but he carefully avoided extending the commitments of the Government of India beyond those undertaken in 1880. But the Afghan ruler seemed quite satisfied with this renewal of assurances of 1880.

Durand found it more difficult to fulfil his secondary duties of arriving at a settlement with Abdur Rahman regarding the questions at issue between the Afghan and Indian Governments.[57] However, the Amir seemed to be honestly intent on arriving at a friendly understanding with India and on avoiding causes of future friction. Therefore, the Afghan ruler agreed to a settlement by which the spheres of influence of the Governments of India and Afghanistan were defined and the Amir "practically gave up his claim to suzerainty over the independent frontier tribes". To achieve this purpose, Durand had to recognize Abdur Rahman's occupation of Asmar, in the Kunar valley, and had to leave him the Birmal valley, on the north-western corner of the Waziri country. However, before doing so Durand had ascertained that the cession would leave the British a good line of communication round the rear of the Waziris and thus give them a complete command of the tribe as a whole. Besides, regarding Kurram the Amir was quite reasonable and was pleased to learn that Mr. Donald was about to take charge of that district; and the Kabul ruler undertook that his officers should meet Donald in a friendly spirit and try to settle all differences. Moreover, Abdur Rahman promised not to interfere for the future with the Bajauris, Afridis, Waziris, Kakars, and other tribes on the Indian frontier. The Amir had practically withdrawn his claim to the Afridi country and Chitral before these negotiations had started. However, Durand had written to the Government of India that steps should be taken without much delay to confirm the settlement by demarcation, where demarcation might be desirable and possible, otherwise, some of the gains of the Agreement would be lost.

Assessing the net results of the negotiations we find that the balance was to a very large extent in favour of the Indian Government, and the settlement gave them practically a free hand in dealing with the frontier tribes in future. Here we may repeat that the

57. *Ibid.*

Amir of Afghanistan had agreed to retire from the Trans-Oxus Roshan and Shighnan on the conditions put forward by the British Government A friendly agreement had been arrived at regarding the Indo-Afghan frontier and the points in dispute between the two Governments had been settled quite satisfactorily. Amir had been allowed to retain Asmar and was given the Birmal valley. His subsidy had been increased by six lakhs of rupees a year, and he had been permitted to import munitions of war, and in this respect he had been promised some assistance as a gift from the Indian Government On his part the Kabul ruler had practically withdrawn his claims to the suzerainty over the frontier tribes from the Persian border to Chitral He had agreed to withdraw from Chageh, and had accepted the British advance upto Chaman. Besides, the Amir had been given to understand that the Government of India must have an open road round the Wazir country and that Wana was necessary to them for that purpose Abdur Rahman gave up Wana and with it his claims to the neighbouring plains of Zarmelan. Thus the concessions made to the Afghan ruler were well within those sanctioned by the Indian Government except in case of Birmal, which had been amply counter balanced by gains elsewhere The Durand Mission attained its primary and secondary objectives at a smaller cost than the Indian and British Governments were willing to pay in 1892 for one object alone, viz, arriving at a friendly understanding with the Amir.

But regarding minor matters Durand could not attain much success With regard to trade Abdur Rahman explained that he could not enter into any convention at that time. though he might do so in future The Amir said that he was obliged to manage the trade himself, lend money to his traders and grant many monopolies because the people of Afghanistan were poor and ignorant. As far as his treatment of his subjects was concerned he was not prepared to listen to any protests or admonitions and he regarded any remonstrances in this matter as an interference with his internal sovereignty Besides, as to deporting Afghan traitors, the Afghan ruler told the British representative that if he did not deport the malcontents, he must kill them As to the British Agent, Durand found that he was not so badly treated as was apprehended. Regarding eastern Wakhan, Abdur Rahman was prepared to agree to any arrangement that the British might make for keeping up the

nominal Afghan suzerainty in that district, but he was not prepared to hold it with his troops. Curzon regarded the Durand Agreement as "most injudicious agreement of Sir Mortimer Durand." He was particularly unhappy with the clause which pledged a supply of arms and ammunition to Amir Abdur Rahman.[58] He also felt that the Agreement made by Durand constituted a perpetual bone of contention upon the frontier, where, on Indian side of the Durand line the Government of India had practically made themselves responsible for the good conduct of a lot of turbulent Mountaineers whom they were powerless to control.[59] Lord George Hamilton considered the outcome of Durand's negotiations as unsatisfactory and felt that the Amir had "induced" Durand "to negotiate and assent to proposals entirely different from those which he was authorised to set on foot." But in the same letter to Curzon he further wrote that it was only fair to remember that Indo-Afghan relations at that time were in a most unsatisfactory condition and Lansdowne had more than once told him that, unless some delimitation of the kind had been arrived at, the Government of India would have either broken off relations with the Amir, or would have been compelled by the exercise of force, to bring him to a more reasonable frame of mind.[60]

The Agreement between Sir M. Durand and the Amir was finally concluded and signed on Sunday, 12 November 1893. Abdur Rahman in his speech in the Durbar informed his people that they had found a firm ally in the British Government, and sincerely enjoined them to stand true and fast by the alliance and to pass on to the future generations sentiments of friendship towards Great Britain.

In order to avoid a clash between Russia and Afghanistan, the Durand Mission had made the Amir agree to withdraw his forces from Roshan and Shighnan, but before it could happen a collision between the Afghan and Russian troops had occurred in Shighnan, in 1894, and the Afghan ruler very wisely withdrew his troops from there Ultimately, in 1895 the Anglo-Russian Agreement with regard to the Pamir question was concluded. The settlement laid down that the spheres of influence of Great Britain and Russia to

58 *Curzon Papers*, 1899, MSS. Eur F. 111/158, Curzon to Hamilton, Simla, 19 April 1899, No. 16, P. 61.

59. *Curzon Papers, op. cit.*, Simla, 31 May 1899, No. 24, P.99

60. *Curzon Papers, op. cit* , Hamilton, Secretary of State for India, to Curzon, London, 20 September 1899, No. 47. P. 154

by him on the right bank of the Panja, and on the relinquishment by the Amir of Bokhara of the positions of Darwaz which lay to the south of the Oxus, in regard to which the Anglo-Russian Governments had agreed to use their influence respectively with the two Amirs.[64]

In view of this agreement the Indian Government suggested to the Amir of Afghanistan the evacuation of the Trans-Oxus provinces on a date between the first of May and the first of June 1895.[65] Her Majestys Government appointed Colonel M G Gerard, Commandant of the Central Indian Horse as their Commissioner. The Amir was asked to send a representative, and the British Commissioner was expected to freely consult him and take his consent regarding fixed points on the line. However, the agreement was to be executed by the British and the Russian Commissioners and thus Afghanistan was placed in the position of a consenting party only. [66]

Abdur Rahman expressed pleasure at the conclusion of the agreement and agreed to send his representative to Lake Victoria. Further, the Amir stated that his troops had evacuated all the Trans-Oxus districts after the arrival of the Russians there in June 1894, and that the Shighnan people were left to themselves. The Kabul ruler requested that Cis-Oxus Darwaz should be evacuated and handed over to the General Commanding the Faizabad Troops.[67]

The British Commissioner was instructed to make every endeavour to reach Bozai Gumbuz by 22 July. He was to consult the Afghan representative as to the points on the frontier, but not to permit him to hold independent communications with the Russian Commissioner, because the Afghan representative had no powers of a Commissioner. He was to demarcate the agreement line in Site with strict regard to the text, and not to leave any gap between the Chinese and the Afghan territory, and he should if possible record a joint agreement with the Russian Commissioner as to the point where the Chinese frontier was reached and the basis on which the position of the Chinese frontier at that spot was determined. The said agreement should stipulate that if the spot in-

64. *Ibid.*
65. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., July 1895, Nos. 891-933, No. 895.
66 *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., *July 1895*, Nos. 891-933, No. 897.
67. *Foreign Dept, Progs.*, Sec. F., July 1895, Nos 891-933, No. 903.

dicated was not on the Chinese soil, the boundary line should be considered as being prolonged in a direction to be recorded in the agreement until Chinese territory was reached. Besides, before making a beginning he should enquire whether South Darwaz had been evacuated, and should insist that the line demarcated would not become effective till all the stipulations of the agreement had been fulfilled He was to permit no correspondence with the Press and was to send to the Government of India diary of weekly progress

Russian Czar appointed Major - General Povallo Schweikovski as his principal Commissioner. The Russo-Afghan boundary in the direction of Wakhan and the Pamirs was demarcated in the summer of 1895 by the Joint Commission, and was formally ratified by the British and Russian Governments in 1896 The result of the Anglo-Russian Commission was that with the exception of Tagh-dum-bash Pamir, Russia was allowed to annex the plateau of Pamir. The British were able to delimit a definite boundary and make the Amir agree to hold eastern Wakhan, which precluded Russia from touching the boundaries of their empire in India. The Indian Government informed the Amir that the Russians had promised to evacuate the Cis-Oxus Darwaz by 13 October 1896; they had also promised that the Amir of Bokhara would not fail to notify the complete withdrawal of Bokharan troops and officials from Darwaz on or before 13 October, so that the Afghan ruler could occupy the territory on that day without any risk of collision [68] In regard to eastern Wakhan the Amir agreed to maintain the appearance of his sovereignty there and the Government of India added one and half lakhs of rupees to his subsidy.

Thus we find that the Russian advance in the region of the Pamirs and the consequent threat to Afghanistan's frontier in that direction brought the Indo-Afghan Governments closer together. The Pamir question formed the basis of agreement between India and Afghanistan The Durand Mission was able to reassure the Amir generally, and remove from his mind any doubts which he had entertained regarding British intentions, and convince him of the identity of his interests with India, especially as regards the aggression of Russia. The Indian Government regarded the understanding

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68 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F., May 1895, Nos 1-24, No 18

arrived at as most satisfactory.[69] The settlement effected by Durand had for the moment disposed of quite satisfactorily all the important questions outstanding between the two Governments. Abdur Rahman's consent to leave the Trans-Oxus territory facilitated the settlement of really embarrassing international complication. It was a proof of Amir's friendship towards the British, and of his loyalty to his obligation to be guided by the advice of the Government of India in his dealings with foreign powers It also gave an evidence of Afghan ruler's earnest desire to remove all causes of contention with the Indian Government The key-note of the Mission was confidence in the Afghans, and to a considerable extent it was to induce the Amir to have confidence in Indo-British Governments.

However, Indo-Afghan relations were strained once again when the work of actual demarcation of the respective tribal boundaries started. Besides, the refusal of her Majesty's Government to permit the Amir to have a permanent and direct Afghan representative at the Court of St. James' also annoyed him. Moreover, Russia's economic pressure in Persia, Afghanistan, and the Far East created international complications for the British and posed a threat to their economic supremacy, and they started making moves which aggravated the Indo-Afghan tension for some time.

69. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., Jan. 1894, Nos 193-217, No 206.

6

THE INTERNATIONAL PICTURE 1896-1905

The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 had revealed the military weakness of China, and the Russians were not slow to exploit it for serving their interests at the expense of the Manchu Empire. The intervention of the Russian Government to prevent Japanese from acquiring Liaotung was a diplomatic victory which started a chain of further triumphs in the Far East. Russia strengthened her grip over China by granting loans to the Chinese Government for the payment of indemnity This led to other important economic and political gains From 1895 onwards, the tempo of Russian designs increased in Manchuria, Mongolia and Korea. This proved a considerable source of anxiety to the British Government. Similarly, by the year 1895, the Russians had gained important economic advantages in Persia and obtained concession for the construction of roads and telegraphs Besides, they had made considerable advance in the Pamir region and were also making efforts to promote their influence in Kashgar and Yarkand. Thus all over Persia, Central Asia and East Asia, Russian economic penetration was keeping pace with her military activities The eternal struggle for political aad economic influence over these lands between the Governments of St Petersburg and St. James had begun once again in right earnest

Towards the close of the nineteenth century the Anglo-Russian antagonism became quite evident in Persia, whose weakness and long common frontier with Russia provided the Government of St. Petersburg with opportunities for applying economic and political

pressure. Russia got further opportunity of riveting her financial grip on Persia when an attempt for raising a Persian Government loan of £ 1,000,000 in England did not succeed. St. Petersburg promptly came forward to assist Persia, and in 1900 agreed to lend her twenty-two and a half millions of roubles at the rate of five per cent, (with a sinking fund), guaranteed by all the custom revenues excluding those of the Persian Gulf ports[1] Besides, the Russian Government was anxious to neutralise the advantage gained by the British in 1892, and therefore, further stipulated that the Persian Government should pay off the loan of half-a-million contracted with the Imperial Bank of Persia to compensate for the cancellation of Tobacco Monopoly. Moreover, all other loans were to be paid simultaneously, and Persia was not to contract any new loan from any foreign power for ten years; and she was not to lower the Customs duty without the consent of the Russian Government.[2] This loan was regarded as the first great blow to Great Britain's material prestige. However, this loan was very soon absorbed, with the result that about 1902 the Persian Government had to contract a second loan from Russia on the same security for 10,000,000 roubles. This loan was accompanied by a concession granted to St. Petersburg for constructing a highway from the frontier town of Julfa to Teheran via Tabriz; and the Russians also gained certain rights to work petroleum and coal, [3] Prior to this, in 1899 Persia had granted to Russian capitalists a mining concession for seventy years in the Karadagh district of the Azerbaijan province.[4]

In spite of the fact that during this period Great Britain was involved in the South African War, she did not fail to counter-act Russian moves directed against her economic interests in Persia. In 1901 the British and Persian Governments agreed that, in addition to telegraph lines already established, a line of three wires should be constructed by the Shah's Government from Kashan to the Baluchistan frontier via Yezd and Karman to secure uninterrupted communication between Europe and India. Further, in 1901, the Persian Government granted to a British subject, William Knox D' Arcy, a

1. Edward G. Browne, *The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909* (Cambridge, 1910) 99
2. Sykes, *Persia*, II, *op. cit*, 375.
3. *Ibid*, 376.
4. Aitchison, XII, *op. cit*, 27.

petroleum concession for sixty years for all Persia except Gilan, Mazandaran, Khorasan, Azerbaijan and Astrabad.[5] The British feared that Russia was not satisfied by her control over north Persia, and wanted to extend her influence to the eastern and southern parts of the kingdom. To check the growing influence of Russia in and towards Seistan, the Indian Government declared open the Seistan-Quetta trade route, and in 1901 a railway connected Quetta and Nasratabad, which was regarded as the chief town of Seistan. Thus the Government of India tried to check Russia's expansion in that direction

During this period Russian activities in the Persian Gulf were also a cause of embarrassment to Great Britain who was anxious to maintain her strong position there, both for the sake of prestige as well as the safety of her Indian Empire.[6] The Russians endeavoured to gain a footing in the Persian Gulf, but their effort to establish a central store at Bunder Abbas from which a coaling station might develop could not succeed During 1900 and 1903, Russia's warships went round the Gulf, but they did a not make further attempts to get a footing The Russians did establish consulates at Basra, Bushire and Bunder Abbas but by way of trade they could not gain much there

Moreover, the termination of the Boer War once again afforded the British leisure to act with freedom and strength in the Persian Gulf In May 1903, a declaration of great importance regarding British policy was made It was declared that, firstly, Great Britain would protect and promote her trade in the Persian Gulf. Secondly, she would not exclude the legitimate trade of others. Thirdly, Britain would consider the establishment of a naval base or a fortified port in the Persian Gulf by any other Power as a very serious danger to her interests, and would oppose it by every possible means. This was no empty threat, and therefore, in order to show that Great Britain was determined to defend her position in the Persian Gulf from attack or challenge, Lord Curzon, the then Governor-General of India organised a naval demonstration there in November 1903.[7] This was followed by Lord Curzon's tour which loudly proclaimed

5 *Ibid*

6. Ward and Gooch, III, *op cit*, 320

7. *Ibid*, 321

that the Indian Government was fully prepared to safeguard the British interests in the Persian Gulf at all costs Curzon felt that the British predominance of political interests in the the Persian Gulf was absolutely essential for India's protection and salvation [8]

However, in spite of England's best efforts to the contrary, Russia had obtained commercial benefits in Persia In November 1901, St Petersburg signed a Commercial Convention with the Shah's Government, which was ratified in December 1902, but its conclusion was not publicly announced until February 1903. The New Customs Tariff was advantageous to Russia but disadvantageous to the British interests and was a diplomatic victory for the Russians.[9] The British too tried to safeguard their trade as far as possible, and therefore a convention for commerce and tariff was signed between Great Britain and Persia on 9 February 1903, and was ratified on 27 May of that year and published in the following July Besides, "the rival claims of Persia and Afghanistan to sovereignty over Seistan were for many years productive of disputes which more than once threatened a rupture of friendly relations between the two States."[10] To resolve these differences, Colonel A.H. McMahon was appointed as British Commissioner, Seistan Arbitration Commission A summary of McMahon report on the final settlement and demarcation of the boundary between Persia and Afghanistan in Seistan is given below.[11]

In the flood of 1896 the Helmund changed its course westwards and created a new main channel known as the Rud-i-Parian. The old main channel past Nad Ali had diminished to a stream of very moderate volume which, after feeding the irrigation canals along its course, reached the Sikhsar channel with very little water. As a result the Hamun at the mouth of the old main channel of the Helmund could not be fed, its area decreased, and the Naizar on its southern border dried up Cultivation extended all over Mian Kangi and into Takht-i-Shah.

The Sikhsar was no longer a flowing stream beyond Deh Gul Shah, but it continued to be recognised as the international boundary. Colonel McMahon believed that no serious disputes regarding

8 *Hamilton Collection*, Private Correspondence-India-Part II, Curzon to Hamilton, 4 January 1900, Catalogue No DS10/1-14

9 Sykes, *Persia*, II, *op cit.*, 377.

10 Aitchison, XII, *op. cit* 28.

11. *Foreign Dept. Progs* , Sec. F., April 1905, Nos 11-17 B, Mo. 33.

that line would have ever arisen between the Persians and Afghans, had not the outside influences begun to extend to Seistan, and had not a Russian Consul arrived on the scene determined to create mischief between the Persians and Afghans, and to turn every opportunity to Russian advantage Thus boundary and water disputes between the Persians and Afghans assumed a serious proportion.

'The extension in 1901, of the Takht-i-Shah canals by the Persians into the old dry Naizar near Tappa-i-Kaniz" may be regarded as the beginning of the series of disputes which led to a fresh British arbitration Perhaps the extension of these canals in itself was not an infringement of the boundary line as mutually recognised by the local people of Persian and Afghan Seistan. But the later cultivation of new lands near Ganguzar on the east of the "Sim" was a violation of that boundary

On their part the Afghans closed the small Sikhsar Channel close to Deh Gul Shah and turned off the little water that reached there into a new canal which took a westerly direction to irrigate some lands west of the "Sim" The Afghans intended to extend this canal northwards to Padai The Persians were prepared to resist this extension by force However, a collision between the two sides was averted and a Persian Commissioner, Yamin-i-Nizam was sent to Seistan to settle the boundary disputes with the Afghan Commissioner, Musa Khan of Herat, sent there by the Afghan ruler.

Musa Khan made unsuccessful attempts to meet his Persian colleague As many months passed without their meeting the Governor of Chakansur brought matters to a head by occupying Deh Dost Muhammad, an important Persian village in Mian Kangi on 6 July 1902 Moreover, an abnormally low river that very summer led to a further serious misunderstanding The relations between the two Governments became very strained and the Shah's Government under the terms of Article six of the Treaty of Paris 1857, called upon the British to use their good offices to settle the disputes regarding Seistan boundary and irrigation canals Russian efforts to secure intervention proved fruitless, and their endeavours to be represented on the Mission were in vain, and the British Arbitration Mission arrived in Seistan in February 1903

The Persians claimed that the boundary as defined in Goldsmid's award ran as follows -

"From the Koh-i-Malik Siah it ran, not in a straight line to

Band-i-Kuhak, but in such a manner as to include in Persian territory the Tarakun tract and all the country on the west of the Helmund leaving only the small narrow fringe of present Afghan cultivation on the left bank of that river in Afghan territory From the Kuhak it followed the Helmund and the Nad Ali Sikhsar Channel, and thence northwards through the old Naizar to the northern edge of the Hamun, and thence in a straight line to Siah Koh "

On the other hand, the Amir claimed a line from Koh-i-Malik Siah to Band-i-Kuhak including Ramrud in Afghan territory. From Band-i-Kuhak their line followed the Helmund and Nad Ali channel to a point about one and-a-half miles from Nad Ali near Burj-i-As and Deh Ido. It was contended that this is the point at which, on Sir Frederick Goldsmid's map, the boundary line leaves the river and that therefore the Afghan boundary should run from here in a straight line to Siah Koh"

The Persians based their claim on their own interpretation of the Goldsmid award and professed ignorance of his map, while the Afghans said that they had never seen the award and insisted on the strict adherence to the map To resolve the differences, firstly, the Mission made an accurate survey of the country, secondly, it determined with the help of the new survey the course of the boundary line as defined in the Goldsmid award. Thirdly, McMahon gave his interpretation of the Goldsmid line as to meet the existing situation. Goldsmid's award remained the basis of the present award with slight modifications.

Colonel A H McMahon formally delivered his award to the Afghan Commissioner on 8 November and to the Persian Commissioner on 11 November 1903 According to McMahon a straight line from the Koh-i-Malik Siah to the Band-i-Kuhak was the only satisfactory solution of the boundary question. From Kuhak to the mouth of the Afghan Canal near Deh Gul Shah the line ran along the Helmund river and Nad Ali and Sikhsar channels. From that point he decided to award to the Afghans the lands between their new canal and the old "Sim" as far as Deh Hassan Kharot, as a reasonable set off to Persia's encroachment at Tappa-i-Kaniz. Besides, the Persian encroachments at Ganguzar and Deh Ali Jangi had no basis, so the British Commissioner decided to restore those lands to Afghanistan. He took advantage of a line of prominent and conveniently situated mounds called Tappa-i-tilai, Tappa-i-Shahraki,

and Tappa-i-Kurki and led the boundary by straight lines along them to Shalghami. From Shalghami to Siah Koh he did not find reason to depart from a straight line for the boundary, and the Nar Ahu was taken as the Siah Koh. Persia obtained Takht-i-Shah, *a place about which much misunderstanding and* discussion had arisen, and which the Afghan representative strove hard to include in Afghan territory. In November 1903, Persia accepted McMahon's line unconditionally,but the Amir's Government accepted McMahon's award only in April 1904 The demarcation of the whole line was successfully carried out upto Siah Koh by 29 December 1904. On 20 February 1905, all the necessary documents regarding the boundary settlement were delivered to both the Persian and Afghan Commissioners Besides, McMahon delivered his water award to the two Commissioners on 10 April 1905, which was as follows -[12]

No irrigation works were to be carried out on either side which were likely to interfere with the requisite supply of water for irrigation on both banks of the river, but both sides had the right, within their own territories, to maintain existing canals, to open out old or disused canals, and to make new canals, from the Helmund River, provided that the supply of water requisite for irrigation on both sides was not diminished

The amount of water requisite for irrigation of Persian lands irrigable from and below the Band-i-Kohak was one-third of the whole volume of the Helmund River which entered Seistan Seistan, to which Goldsmid's award was applicable, comprised all lands on both banks of the Helmund from Bandar-i-Kamal Khan downwards

Persia was, therefore, entitled to one-third of the whole Helmund River calculated at the point where water was first taken off from it to irrigate lands on either bank situated at or below Bandar-i-Kamal Khan.

Any irrigation works constructed by Afghanistan to divert water into Seistan lands, as earlier defined, must allow of at least one-third of the volume of the whole river being available for Persian use at Band-i-Kohak.

A British officer of irrigation experience was to be permanently attached to the British Consulate in Seistan. He had the power to

12 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, June 1905, Nos 1-20, No 16, Enclo I

give an opinion, when required by either party, on any case of doubt or dispute over division of water that might arise. To enable this officer to perform his functions properly, free access was to be given to him by either side to the Helmund River and its branches and the heads of canals leading therefrom

The maintenance of the Band-i-Kohak was of great importance to the welfare of Persian Seistan Afghanistan was to allow Persia to move this band, if necessary, and grant Persia the right to excavate the short canal requisite for such new band through Afghan territory to the Rud-i-Seistan

Similarly, if it became necessary for Afghanistan to move the existing Shahgul Band across the Rud-i-Pariun somewhat lower down that stream, Persia was to allow Afghanistan right of way for a canal through Persian territory from that band to the Nad Ali Channel.

The rights to the Helmund River which Afghanistan had as owner of the Helmund, were restricted in favour of Persia in accordance with Goldsmid's award. Therefore, Persia had no right to alienate to any other Power the water rights thus acquired without the permission of Afghanistan

The two countries were warned that the Helmund River in Seistan was subject to sudden and important changes in its course, and such changes were liable to take place in the future, and great care was, therefore, to be exercised in the opening out of new canals, or the enlargement of old canals leading from the Helmund. Unless this was done with proper precaution, it was likely to cause the river to divert itself entirely at such points and cause great loss to both countries

Thus the British were able to settle the Seistan dispute and maintain their influence in that region, and save the flank of their lines of defence, particularly the Kabul-Kandahar line from the Russians [13]

During this period the British were not indifferent to possible Russian encroachments into the state of Tibet. In 1898, Dorjieff, a Siberian Buddhist and tutor to the Dalai Lama, headed an official Tibetan mission to Russia which was repeated again in 1900. The Indian and British Governments had a suspicion that St. Petersburg

13 *Ampthill Collection*, Ampthill to St J Brodrick, Simla, 30 June 1904, No 24, Catalogue No. E233

might be plotting to establish its influence in Tibet in order "to go around the defences of the Khyber Pass and the 'scientific' Afghan frontier,"[14] and threaten India from that direction Thus Tibet also became a pawn on the chess-board of Anglo-Russian rivalry in Asia The Government of India viewed the activities of the Dalai Lama with grave concern, and made preparations to counteract the Russian influence in Tibet. Lord Curzon's repeated endeavours to communicate with the Dalai Lama proved unsuccessful. The British wanted the Tibetans to observe the terms of the Treaty of 1890, and Great Britain considered her interests in Tibet as greater than those of Russia Curzon proposed to despatch a mission to Tibet, with an armed escort to which the British Government reluctantly agreed Colonel Younghusband headed the mission to Tibet, and finally succeeded in reching Lhasa in August 1904. In the end, Tibet agreed to fulfil the terms of the Treaty of 1890 The Ninth Article of the Convention was a guarantee against Russian danger, and security for the interests of Great Britain The British attempt to secure their political and economic demands proved fruitful The three trade marts, of Gyantse, Gartok and Yatung, were thrown open to the English, and a British Trade Agent was established at Gyantse The Tibetan Government was prevented from alienating its territories or yielding economic concessions to any foreign power without the British also benefiting from them

During this period Siam also became a target of Russia's political and economic activities Germany was also England's keen rival in the economic field The Anglo-French Convention neutralising Siam proper was signed in 1896 However, the Franco-British rivalry in Siam made Russia take a lively interest in that country, because of her new friendship with France, and also because the Russians needed new markets for the increased production of their oil fields [15] With the accession of Czar Nicholas II the relations between Siam and St Petersburg became quite cordial, and in 1898, the Siamese King sent Prince Damrong on a mission to European countries Damrong had taken with him a personal letter for the Russian Emperor in which he was asked in veiled terms to help Siam to settle her unsettled problems with France [16] Thus Siam also

14 Rostovsky, *op cit*, 206
15 *Ibid*
16 *Ibid*, 210

became a field for the penetration of Russian influence, and the friendship of the two countries culminated in the signing of a treaty in 1899 which was modelled on an earlier treaty between Great Britain and Siam, which defined ownership of land, trade facilities and customs and trade dues.

In view of the increasing Anglo-Russian territorial and commercial rivalry in Asia, the Far East, particularly China had become a major field for their ambition and intrigue Great Britain was determined to maintain her commercial supremacy in China and increase her trade with that country In 1896 England controlled a major portion of the entire Chinese commerce, and it was due to her efforts that the 22 Chinese ports had been thrown open to European trade. [17] Russians also felt the necessity of expanding their trade and they could not view with equanimity England's commercial supremacy in China. The Sino-Japanese War had exposed China's weakness which the Government of St Petersburg wished to exploit. There ensued a diplomatic tussle between the Governments of Russia and Great Britain because Russian Trans-Siberian railroad had opened the back door of China, and because Russia had the support of France and at times that of Germany. [18] Russia had been advancing her interests and influence in Manchuria, and expected some concessions from the Chinese Government for her intervention on their behalf in 1895 The Russians wanted that their Trans-Siberian Railway should run across Manchuria in a straight line to Vladivostok. Therefore, when in 1896, Li Hung Chang, ambassador extraordinary, went to represent China at the coronation of the Czar, he signed a convention [19] granting to Russia the right to divert the Trans-Siberian Railway across Manchuria to Vladivostok, and construct a line from Vladivostok to Hunchun and Kirin. Besides, the Chinese were to have recourse only to Russian banks to finance their railway from Shainhaikwan to Mukden, and from Harbin to Port Arthur and Talienwan, and the latter was to follow the Russian guage. [20] Further, he had also agreed that any aggression on the part of Japan on the Asiatic dominions of Russia would be jointly met ; and they decided not to conclude any treaty of peace without

17. McCordock, *op cit.*, 147
18 *Ibid* , 151
19 Morse, III, *op, cit.*, 83.
20 *Ibid.*

the consent of the other. Finally, Russia secured the right to transport troops on the railway across Manchuria to Vladivostok, as a measure of protection to China in times of war as well as in peace. According to the last clause the railway was to be built and exploited by the Russo-Chinese Bank which had been organised in 1895 This Bank could carry on ordinary business, and with the agreement of Chinese Government, it could also collect taxes, coin money, and secure grants of railway and telegraph concessions. [21] It was given the work of forming the Chinese Eastern Railway Company, which was to build the Russian railroad across Manchuria.[22] Contrary to China's intentions and expectations the Russian Government acquired a controlling interest and owned the shares of the bank. [23] Thus, the Chinese Eastern Railway came under the control of the Government at St Petersburg, and this railway was completed in 1903. The agreements which covered these arrangements provided trade concessions to Russia At this time Great Britain's commercial supremacy was being challenged by Russia from the north and by France from the south, and the British felt unhappy to find the Chinese being led by the Russians

In March 1896, China was in need of money once again, and Germany joined hands with Great Britain in granting a loan to China [24] In 1897 the Chinese required another loan, and every country tried to make use of China's financial difficulties and extract commercial advantages from her. The British also utilised this opportunity to strengthen their commercial hold in the Yangtze valley However, due to Franco-Russian protests to England's loan terms, China refused to borrow money from either party. But in 1898 a private British concern known as the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, in conjunction with the *Deutsche-Asiatische* Bank agreed to give a loan to the Chinese Government, and thus the British achieved a diplomatic triumph over Russia During this period when a constant struggle was going on amongst the European powers for gaining important railroad and mining concessions, the British secured China's" promise never to alienate any portion of the Yangtze Valley, and to keep an Englishman as head of the Mari-

21 McCordock, *op cit*, 162-3
22 *Ibid*
23 Rostovsky, *op cit*, 224
24 McCordock, *op cit*, 163

time Customs" till the time that Great Britain's commerce remained predominant.[25]

The international situation was further complicated by Germany's seizure of Kiao-Chow in 1897 Ultimately in 1898 the Chinese Government agreed to lease Kiao-Chow to Germany. But other powers did not lag behind in taking advantage of this "grab and take" policy initiated by Germany Soon after, Russians, following in the footsteps of Germans, occupied Port Arthur and Talienwan. This spurred England to seize Weihai-Wei, which was finally leased to her by the treaty of 1898

However, upto this time the British diplomacy had successfully counteracted the Russian designs of gaining concession in the Yangtze Valley, but in December 1898, England's endeavours to exploit that part of China were brought to a halt by the Chinese Government's decision to grant no further concessions for the construction of railway lines. [26] By this time St. Petersburg had obtained concessions for the construction of 1,530 miles of railways and England had concessions to build 2,800 miles of railroad lines. [27]

China's exploitation by European powers filled her cup of misery and degradation to the brim, and in 1900 she decided to eliminate all foreign influence from her empire. The anti-foreign agitation gave rise to the Boxer Movement in 1900, which was ultimately suppressed by an international force, and a settlement was concluded in September 1901. The Boxer Movement, however, provided St. Petersburg with an opportunity to occupy the whole of Manchuria. This military occupation of Manchuria at the beginning of 1902 seemed to augur an evil omen for all foreign interests, as well as to those of China, hence in order to counteract it, Great Britain and Japan concluded the Anglo-Japanese Agreement of 30 January 1902.[28] This treaty of 1902 was concluded for five years, but a new compact having a wider scope was signed in London for ten years in August, 1905. This agreement introduced two new principles of great importance to England.[29] Firstly, the

25 *Ibid*, 191
26 *Ibid*, 290
27. *Ibid*, 291.
28. Morse, III, *op cit.*, 417
29. Gooch, *op cit*, 324

scope of this treaty was extended to include India and thus it set right the so-called inequality of advantage under the Treaty of 1902, and secondly, each power was to come to the assistance of the other if attacked by a single Power—a stipulation which increased the liabilities and obligations of Great Britain [30]

However the immediate result of the Anglo-Japanese Agreement of 1902, was the conclusion of the Russo-Chinese Convention regarding Manchuria,which was signed at Peking in April 1902 [31] By this agreement Russia agreed to the reestablishment of China's authority in Manchuria and promised to evacuate her troops within eighteen months The withdrawal of troops was to be achieved in three stages at six month's intervals According to the terms of this Convention the first stage of evacuation was completed within six months But in the second stage Yingkow (the treaty port of New-Chwang) which was to be evacuated on or before 8 April 1903 was not evacuated on the due date St. Petersburg was reluctant to release it grip over Manchuria west of the Yalu, because Japan was there in Korea, east of the Yalu [32] It seems quite possible that Russia was reluctant to withdraw because it apprehended Japan's challenge to her supremacy in that region Moreover, at this time it came to be officially known that some private Russians had acquired timber concessions in the valley of the Yalu, and this made Russia s designs quite clear

Besides, at this time St Petersburg also started to consolidate its position in Manchuria by concluding a new agreement with the Chinese Government, known as the "Convention of seven points," but England, Japan and America decided to urge China to resist the demands [33] Russian activities in Manchuria threatened Japan's dominant position in Korea and her trade in Manchuria, and therefore the Japanese decided to come to terms with the Czar's Government However, no agreement could be arrived at between the two countries and their diplomatic relations came to an end in February 1904, leading to the Russo-Japanese War ultimately.

The Japanese fleet attacked the Russian fleet off Port Arthur and defeated it Due to the strength and superior manoeuverbility of

30 *Ibid*
31 Morse, III, *op cit* ,418
32 *Ibid* , 419
33 *Ibid* , 421-2

the Japanese fleet, the Russian fleet failed to accomplish any success. Russia suffered defeat after defeat. Russia's army had been driven back beyond Mukden, her fleet had been swept from the eastern seas. Besides, Russia was aflame with revolution and the Czar Nicholas II decided to sue for peace. The Treaty of Portsmouth was signed on 5 September 1905. Japan's domination in Korea was recognised ; Manchuria was to be restored to the exclusive administration of China, but the lease of Liaotung Peninsula was to be transferred to Japan; St Petersburg ceded to Japan the railway from Port Arthur to Changchun. Russia also ceded to Japan the southern portion of Sakhalin, and recognised the Chinese sovereignty and the principle of equal opportunity in Manchuria Thus the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 gave a severe jolt to Russia's economic penetration and imperialistic designs in the Far East, it brought about the emergence of Japan, Great Britain's ally, as a first rate Power in Asia; and it lowered St. Petersburg's position and prestige in Asia as well as in Europe. However, the Russo-British antagonism in China was merely a part of that larger struggle which continued between the two countries throughout Asia.

Russia was also making efforts to obtain economic influence in Afghanistan Between 1900 and 1902 the Government of St. Petersburg endeavoured to open direct communications with the Afghan Government. In February 1900, M. Ignatieff, the Russian Agent in Bokhara, addressed a communication to a commercial Agent of Amir Abdur Rahman. The Russian embassy in London had communicated a Memorandum to Her Majesty's Government on 6 February 1900, in which the Czar's Government reaffirmed the assurances that they regarded Afghanistan as entirely outside the sphere of Russian action and influence, but at the same time they mentioned that Russia and Afghanistan had become limitrophe powers, and that direct relations should exist between them in regard to frontier matters. [34] Further, it was stated that these relations would have no political character. At this time the Government of India received the Afghan ruler's complaint respecting the communications made to his commercial Agent by Russia. However, in his letter Ignatieff had made reference to the movements of Russian troops into the Trans-Caspian Province, and had assured him that they had no

34 *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., July 1902, Nos. 77-90 No. 79.

these invitations offered no encouragement to further attempts in this direction [37]

Further by 1905 St Petersburg had constructed a number of strategic railways upto the frontiers of Afghanistan and the gates of Herat. With the completion of Orenburg-Tashkent Railway, Russia's Central Asian territories were connected by an unbroken line with the whole Russian system From the military point of view this railway greatly facilitated the work of Russia in Central Asia, because in a short space of some six days and at any period of the year, her troops from Moscow could be thrown into the heart of Asia, and could reach the borders of Chinese Turkestan or Afghanistan without any difficulty These railways made rapid transportation of troops possible, and facilitated the flow of Russian merchandise to these regions of Asia St Petersburg not only gained a definite hold on Turkestan, but also solved the problem of its political and economic penetration in these areas.

However, these activities on the part of the Russian Government spurred the Government of India to take necessary measures for the safety of their political and commercial interests in Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet. The British entertained some vague fears that the Russians were trying to establish their influence in Tibet, and they took immediate steps to safeguard that side from any possible encroachments by their rival Russia's intrigues in Seistan made Lord Curzon work with added zeal to bring South Persia into the sphere of Indian defences The Russians had taken advantage of the Boer War and had made themselves maters of the trade and roads of Northern Persia, but the British diplomacy frustrated their designs of planting themselves firmly in the sea-ports of the Persian Gulf

However, in view of these developments, and due to the death of the old Amir the Indian Government desired to enter into fresh engagements with the new Amir, which could bring the two countries still closer; and they also wanted the Amir's consent to construct strategic railways towards the Afghan frontier as well as railway and telegraph lines into Afghanistan itself. But Habibullah's persistent refusal to have a new compact with the British, in view of the fact that he was fulfilling his obligations towards the British Government in accordance with the Anglo-Afghan Agreement con-

37. *Ibid*

cluded with his late father, and his refusal to permit them to build railways and telegraph lines in his country once again embittered the Indo-Afghan relations The Indo-Afghan boundary disputes coupled with the Afghan Government's inability to provide better trade facilities to the Indo-British Government increased the existing tension between the two Governments, which was largely a product of complicated international situation.

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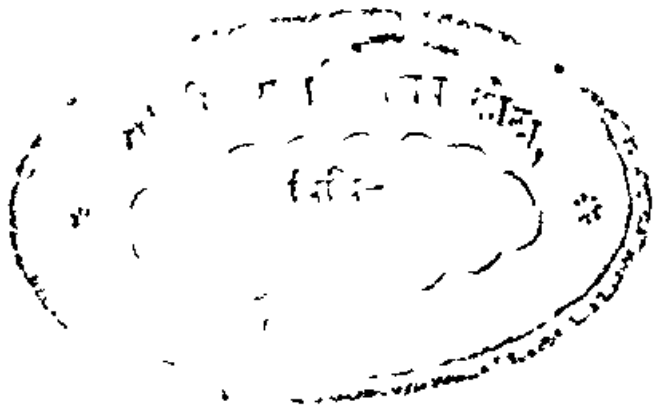

Events Leading to the Despatch of Dane Mission to Kabul and the Agreement of 1905

With the demarcation of Russo-Afghan boundary in the region of the Pamirs, Russia's territorial expansion in that direction was complete. Since Afghanistan was a pawn on the chess-board of international rivalry, St Petersburg after making its boundary conterminous with the Afghan Kingdom, made efforts to adopt indirect methods for applying pressure and achieving a foothold in that territory. During this period Russians made zealous attempts to open direct relations of a so-called non-political nature with the Afghan ruler The British apprehended that Russia's economic penetration in Afghanistan would lead to the establishment of her political influence there, and therefore, they resisted the demands of the Czar's Government to have any relations with their protected and subsidised state. The Russian railways which had reached the Afghan frontiers by that time added to the British anxiety of keeping Afghanistan strictly within their sphere of influence.

Besides, the disputes regarding Indo-Afghan boundary, once again, created tension between the Governments of India and Afghanistan The tribal risings during this period, and the Amir's dealings with the tribal people along with a general belief on the part of the Indian Government that the Ruler of Afghanistan was making attempts to open direct communications with foreign Powers, strained the Indo-Afghan relations to a considerable extent. More-

over, the difference of opinion, regarding the interpretation of their Agreements of 1880 and 1893, between the Governments of India and Afghanistan aggravated the misunderstanding Later, Amir Habibullah's inability to accept Viceroy's invitation to visit India; Indian Government's efforts to have a fresh compact with the new Amir, Government of India's action in stopping the Amir's import of arms and ammunitions, their projected railways in Khyber and Kurram, and the Amir's boycott of the Chaman Railway were other causes of friction between the two Governments However, the differences were ultimately resolved more or less with the despatch of the Dane Mission to Kabul, which succeeded to a great extent in lessening the tension between the two countries

Frequent disputes regarding the Indo-Afghan boundary were a source of irritation to the Government of India and the Amir of Kabul In 1894 it had been arranged to divide the work of demarcation among three Joint British-Afghan Commissions starting almost simultaneously [1] The first Commission was to work at the common boundary near the top of the Khyber pass; the second was to demarcate the boundary of the Kurram valley and the country immediately to the south of it, and the third was to work on the frontier which marched with the Baluchistan Agency territories [2]

Waziristan Boundary

Regarding the demarcation on the Waziristan frontier, the Government of India's policy was to attain a position of advantage for dealing with the Waziris in case hostilities ever broke out with them [3] At the same time they desired to settle their future relations with the tribe simultaneously with the demarcation of the frontier [4] The Indian Government was keen to carry the tribes with it in whatever it did, and to interfere as little as possible with their internal affairs [5] But the Government of India could not afford to neglect the obligations to protect the borders and posts and the Gomal caravan route or to offer sefety and protection to

1 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F, April 1894, Nos 1-57, No 53
2 *Ibid*
3 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, July 1894, Nos 402-34, No 417
4 *Ibid*
5 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, July 1894, Nos 402-34, No, 433

those sections and leading men of the tribe, who had rendered co-operation in coercing the turbulent characters and punishing murderers and robbers, for without it they could not maintain their position.[6] Therefore, to strengthen their hold and be in a position from where they could easily intercept raiders in the Gomal, the Government of India advocated the establishment of a military post at or near Spin.[7] The Waziris were told about the arrangements for the delimitation of their part of the frontier, and also about the British intention of establishing a post at Wana or Spin, but perhaps owing to the fear that their independence was in danger the tribes attacked the British camp at Wana on 3 November 1894.[8] This led to the despatch of a punitive expedition into the Mahsud country under William Lockhart, and on 15 December 1894, he was instructed to assume the chief military and political charge, to punish those responsible for the attack on Wana, and to enforce terms.[9] At the end of January 1895, all the hostages demanded by the Government, except three, were surrendered, Mullah Powindah had left the Waziri country; almost all the rifles and government horses and some of the money looted during the attack had been restored, and in compliance with the terms demanded the tribesmen were bringing in arms.[10]

The heavy snow on the passes made the task of delimitation impossible northwards from Domandi to Charkiaghar without the delimitation party crossing into Afghan territory.[11] Hence, it was decide to divide the work of demarcation into two sections: (a) from Domandi northwards to Khwaja Khider; and (b) from Charkiaghar southwards. Mr. King was given charge of the delimitation of the first section; and Mr. Anderson was to be entrusted with the demarcation of the second section. Mr. King was able to start the demarcation work on 28 January 1895, in company with the Suleiman Khel and Kharoti Maliks, and fifteen days later he reported that the demarcation on his section had been completed.[12]

6 *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid*
8. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Feb. 1895, Nos. 128-577, No. 571.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., March 1895, Nos. 490-714, No. 713
11. *Ibid*
12. *Ibid.*

The Amir was informed about it and at the same time he was given to understand by the Viceroy that Sir William Lockhart was about to march up the Tochi Pass, towards Charkiaghar, and the demarcation party under Mr Anderson expected to start work early in March.[13]

Regarding the first section of the Waziristan boundary demarcated by Mr King, the Afghan ruler accepted the line with the exception of the portion of the boundary demarcated between Khwaja Khider and Lar Khwah.[14] Amir Abdur Rahman contended that, on this section, the frontier had not been demarcated in accordance with the Convention and that it should be drawn several miles east of the present line. Therefore he proposed that it should be redemarcated by a Joint Commission. The Government of India informed the Amir that they were unable to meet his wishes, and explained to him that he was mistaken in thinking that the demarcated boundary was not in accordance with the Convention, and that the line which he claimed would include within Afghanistan a considerable portion of the country on the British side of the frontier agreed upon—a tract which belonged mainly to the Ahmadzai Waziris of Wana, who were under the control of the Indian Government. The Government of India further reminded the Kabul ruler that it was his own proposal that the British Commissioner should demarcate the boundary without the cooperation of an Afghan Commissioner, and that in agreeing to this proposal the Viceroy had expressly stipulated that the frontier laid down by the British officer would be accepted by the Amir in the same complete way as that of other portions of the boundary where British and Afghans had acted together. The Indian Government assured Amir Abdur Rahman that the boundary laid down by Mr. King was a fair one and was quite in accordance with the Convention, and pointed out that they could not agree to relinquish the tract claimed by the Afghan ruler, and asked him to accept the arrangement made in the same spirit of friendship which had brought about a settlement elsewhere.[15]

However, when in September 1895, the Indian Government sent to the Amir, for ratification, the map showing the boundary between

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13 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, June 1895, Nos 164-339, No 174
14 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, May 1896, Nos 128-210, No 209
15 *Ibid*

Domandi and the Laram, he objected to the portion between Khwaja Khider and Lar Khwah, and asked for a redelimitation of this part, but the British declined to do so In 1897 Sardar Gul Muhammad Khan proposed to reopen the question but the Government of India once again declined it.[16] In 1898 when Gul Muhammad was invited to repair the boundary pillars in the portion in question, he replied that he had no concern in maintaining the boundary pillars on a line which had not received the Kabul ruler's ratification In 1901 the Indian Government once again informed the Amir that the boundary pillars between Domandi and Khwaja Khider had been destroyed, and that an Afghan post had been established within the Indian border, that the demolished pillars would be constructed again and the post within the Indian border would be removed. They further informed the Afghan ruler that the delimitation of that portion of the border must be considered as final, and that they were not prepared to reopen the question But the Kabul ruler repeated his complaints about the boundary and suggested that it should be reexamined by a Joint Commission. However, due to Amir Abdur Rahman's death, at this time, and the Mahsud operations the whole question was shelved indefinitely, though the Government of India had no intention of granting the Amir's request. Once again, in 1903, Gul Muhammad raised the boundary question and the Indian Government instructed Colonel Deane to inform him that the question could not be reopened.[17] Thus, the Waziristan boundary proved to be a constant source of friction between the Governments of India and Afghanistan.

Further, there was some dispute regarding the demarcation of boundary to the north of the Kabul river. Here the main object of the Indian Government was the security of the Kabul river route.[18] The Afghan authorities desired the whole of Mohmand tribe to be left to Afghanistan, and never relished the idea of some portion of it being sequestered by the Indian Government In 1895 Mr. Udny was able to conclude an agreement which defined the boundary from the Hindukush to the vicinity of Nawa Kotal; but due to Afghan claims the demarcation between Nawa Kotal

16. *Foreign Dept, Progs.*, Sec. F., May 1905, No. 221.
17. *Ibid*
18. *Foreign Dept Progs.*, Sec. F., Jan. 1897, Nos. 379-87, P. 423.

and the Khyber became impossible and the British Commissioner had to be recalled.[19] In 1896 the Government of India decided to authorise the Political Officers on the frontier to enter into relations with the Dawezai, Utmanzai, Halimzai, and Tarakzai sections of the Mohmand tribes on the British side of the Durand Line, including the Isa Khel and Burhan Khel sections of the Tarakzais in Pindiali and to assure them that they would in any case remain under British influence.[20] The Indian Government did not intend at this time to give similar assurances to the Mohmands of the Baezai and Khwaizai sections who lived in Mitai and its neighbourhood. In case the headmen of these sections on the British side of the Durand Line applied to local officers for advice, they were to be informed that the exact line of the boundary through their country was under discussion.[21]

Regarding Mohmand territory the Governments of India and Afghanistan entered into long and detailed correspondence. Amir Abdur Rahman held the view that it was the intention of the Kabul Agreement of 1893 to leave the whole of the Mohmand territory to Afghanistan. The Indian Government contended that the intention of that Agreement was to divide the Mohmand country.[22] Perhaps Durand had drawn the boundary line on the agreement map in such a way as to divide the Mohmand territory in two parts because of strategic necessity of controlling the passes north of Peshawar leading westwards into the Afghan Kingdom on the flank of the high road from Badakhshan into the Bashgul and Kunar valleys, and also perhaps due to the extreme undesirability of having the Afghan frontier close to the Peshawar district.[23] Durand's plan would have prevented the Afghan ruler from overlapping British routes into Afghanistan via the Kabul river and the Khyber.[24] But the mounting tension between the Indian and Afghan Governments due to various reasons thwarted even a remote possibility of an actual demarcation of their spheres of influence between Nawa Kotal and Safed Koh, and ultimately the British

19 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F June 1895, Nos 894--937, No. 935
20 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Aug 1896, Nos 30-130, No 102
21 *Ibid*
22 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Aug 1896, Nos 30-130, No. 101
23 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Frontier A, Jan 1898, No 77, K W. Part II, P. 28.
24 *Hamilton Collection*, Private Correspondence-India Part I, Elgin to Hamilton, 20 April 1896, Cat No D509/1-12

Government agreed with the Government of India in postponing the delimitation of the Mohmand boundary [25]

In 1897 violent tribal risings occurred in the frontier area. In his letter of 13 August 1897, the Governor-General informed the Secretary of State that the Government of India were not in a position to establish that the Amir had a hand in the frontier disturbances But, he further wrote it was the general opinion on the frontier that the Amir was not unconcerned in it Besides, it seemed certain that a number of Afghan subjects had taken part in the attack on Shabkaddar. Hence the Government of India, in their letter to the Amir, demanded that he should take immediate steps to recall his subjects and make it impossible for them to repeat such deliberate violation of British territory [26] At the same time the Viceroy thought that it would be advisable to stop war materials, if any were imported for Afghanistan, until the hostilities had ended.[27] Therefore, in his letter of 30 August 1897, the Governor-General informed the Afghan ruler that owing to the frontier disturbances created by the Afridis, the carriage of valuable goods, specially of warlike stores, must necessarily for the time be discontinued [28] But there was no intention to depart from the commitment to support the Afghan Government as long as the Amir adhered to his obligations. [29]

Soon after the pacification of the frontier, the Government of India entered into a prolonged correspondence with the Amir in 1898 to determine the Indo-Afghan boundary in the vicinity of Tor Kham and resume the work of delimitation of the frontier. The Kabul ruler in reply maintained that Tor Kham was within Afghan territory, and the British line extended only upto Landi Khana. The Indian Government claimed that Tor Kham was within their sphere of influence. This dispute about Tor Kham as also regarding some other places in the Mohmand country, could not be resolved until the Amir had agreed for demarcation, which not forthcoming it was decided to let the boundary remain as it was until proper delimitation was adopted.

25. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec F, July 1904, Nos 31-149, No. 80.
26 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F., Sept 1897, Nos. 250-973, No
27. *Ibid*
28. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec F, Nov 1897, Nos 1-233, N
29 *Ibid*

It may be surmised that the Indian frontier policy was conditioned by imperial considerations rather than the mere local need of prevention of plunder on the border [30] Moreover, the state of British relations with the Amir largely affected their frontier policy.[31] The main object was to obtain military predominance over Russia in case of a conflict For this purpose the security of the frontier and the maintenance of the Khyber Pass as a safe artery of communication and trade were important considerations. But the Secretary of State for India did not want any expansion of liabilities and, in his despatch of 28 January 1898, instructed the Indian Government that no new responsibility should be undertaken, unless absolutely required by actual strategic considerations for the protection of the border [32] Therefore the Government of India abstained from annexing the tribal territory or interfering unduly with their affairs [33] All that the Indian Government professed to do was to adhere to the policy of "vigilant, constant and never ceasing defence." [34]

Another problem which entailed prolonged correspondence between the Governments of India and Afghanistan was the boycott of the new Chaman Railway Station by the Afghan traders On 17 March 1899, H S Barnes, Agent to the Governor-General in Baluchistan, wrote to the Indian Government that the old order appeared to be still in force to the great inconvenience of traders, and the injury to the New Chaman Bazaar which would naturally increase in importance and dimensions if Chaman were the terminus of the railway [35] He further informed that there was considerable inconvenience in arranging for the proper protection of caravans when unloading at Kila Abdulla where there were no troops and very few levies [36] Thereupon, the Governor-General, in his letter of 6 May 1899, impressed the Amir about the usefulness of New Chaman Railway station, and expected that he would issue orders permitting his merchants to make use of the Chaman station,

30 *Foreign Dept Progs.*, Frontier A Jan 1898, No 77,
31 *Hamilton Collection*, Hamilton to Elgin, 22 July 1898, Vol III, Cat No C125 1-3
32 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F., April 1898, Nos. 214-15, No 214
33 *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Frontier A Jan 1898, No 77,
34 *Ibid*
35 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Aug 1899, Nos. 87-92, No 87
36 *Ibid*

so that both the Governments of India and Afghanistan would benefit by the increase in trade, which would necessarily follow.[37] The Amir, in his reply, suggested that it would be proper and more desirable to leave the Kandahar merchants undisturbed to adopt the course which might be of benefit to them.[38] He further warned that if the Kandahar merchants were forced against their will to use the Chaman station, the Russians might also demand that Herat merchants use the railway station at Kushk for the transport of merchandise.[39] The Kabul ruler was informed that the Government of India suspected that it was under Amir's orders that the Afghan merchants had originally refrained from going to Chaman and went to Kila Abdulla instead, and therefore, all they suggested was that such orders, if they existed, should be withdrawn.[40] Regarding Amir's reference to Russian demand, the Viceroy wrote that there was no parallel between the Russian railway and the British railway or between the relations of Russia and Great Britain with the Government of Afghanistan.[41] However, even the stiff attitude of Lord Curzon's Government failed to bend the Amir to be submissive. The Kabul ruler replied in July 1899, that as he did not see that any benefit would accrue to the people of Afghanistan by his compelling them to make use of the Chaman railway, he would refrain from issuing such orders.[42] Further, Afghanistan had mercantile relations both with the Russians as well as the British, and it was impossible to discontinue them with the Russians because of the closeness of the Russian and Afghan boundaries. Therefore, in order to check the Russian officials from making fresh demands, he would do nothing to direct the merchants to shift their mercantile transactions from Kila Abdulla to the Chaman station.[43]

Besides, Amir's attempts to open direct communication with foreign powers, his trade restrictions; his aversion to the construction of railways and telegraphs in Afghanistan caused annoyance

37. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec F, Aug. 1899, Nos 87-92, No 88.
38. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec F, Aug 1899, Nos 87-92, No. 89.
39. *Ibid*
40. *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F, Aug 1899, Nos 87-92, No. 90
41. *Ibid*
42. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec F, Aug. 1899, Nos. 87-92, No. 92
43. *Ibid*

to the Government of India Moreover, Lord Curzon's warning to the Afghan ruler that he should not import excessive arms into Afghanistan[44] aggravated the mounting tension and further strained the relations of the two Governments

After Amir Abdur Rahman's death in 1901, his eldest son Habibullah Khan succeeded him as the Amir of Afghanistan The Government of India wished that the death of Abdur Rahman should serve as the starting point for a new order of things, which might better harmonise the interests of Afghanistan and England. However, Amir Habibullah, in his letter of 4 October 1901, informed the Indian Government that his duty was to act and behave in the same manner as his father used to do; and that he would be a friend of late Amir's friends, and would avoid his late father's enemies and be far from them[45] He also entertained the hope that friendly ties between the Governments of India and Afghanistan would be strengthened and rendered firmer than ever.[46] In the meantime the British Government had approved the idea of recognising Habibullah as the Amir[47] They also approved the Viceroy's intention to take no steps which might indicate either uneasiness or any forward movement on the part of the Government of India. The Viceroy was instructed to adhere to this policy, and even if the circumstances changed, not to make any forward movement without reference to, or approval by, His Majesty's Government.[48] Hence the Governor-General in reply to Amir's letter reciprocated the friendly feelings and informed him that the British Government would likewise be a friend to the Afghan ruler, and would maintain and strengthen the friendly ties that united the two Governments and the people.[49] At the same time he gave a significant hint about the existing relations by writing that at present he would not enter into any discussion about the political affairs due to the Amir's grief, but later on there were many matters about which the Amir would desire to write to him and he to the Amir, and which concerned the alliance between the two Governments, and the

44 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec, F, Aug 1899, Nos 76 83, No 81A
45 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Nov 1901, Nos 1-129, No 50
46 *Ibid*
47 [illegible] *Progs*, Sec F, Nov 1901, Nos, 1-129, No 29
Progs, Sec F, Nov 1901, Nos 1-129, No 80

friendship between the British and the Afghan peoples.[50]

Later, in their letter of 7 February 1902, the Indian Government wrote to the Kabul ruler that since he had consolidated his position and was free from anxiety, they would approach him on important matters relating to the Anglo-Afghan relations.[51] They also expressed their wish that the alliance that was founded in 1880 should continue and should grow even stronger in the time of Amir Habibullah, and for that purpose desired that there should be friendly discussion between the two Governments on matters which affected the interests of both. They also reminded the Amir that there were sometimes misunderstandings between the Government of India and the late Amir, and therefore, the Indian Government was desirous to remove all such causes of friction, and come to an understanding with the present Amir that should be free from misconception in the future. In order to settle these matters, the Governor-General of India invited the Amir to meet him at Peshawar either in the latter part of April 1902, or in the month of October that year.[52] The Amir replied that the invitation for the sake of a meeting seemed very proper and agreeable to him, but he showed his inability to visit India until his internal affairs had been smoothed.[53] He informed the Viceroy that he would himself come to India when he was completely free from the complexities of his Kingdom, or send one of his brothers to India. Further he expressed his firm adherence to the terms of the Agreement of 1880, and hoped that no change or alteration would be made in them. He also stated that all petty frontier troubles might be settled by correspondence as heretofore.[54]

However, after the death of Abdur Rahman, Curzon was not prepared to tolerate under Habibullah the sort of relations between the Indian Government and the Afghan ruler which had grown up under the late Amir.[55] As far back as 1889 Curzon had gathered an impression that Amir Abdur Rahman was not fulfilling his duties and obligations imposed by the Indo-Afghan Agreement.[56] He felt

50 *Ibid*
51 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, June 1902, Nos 95-103, No. 95.
52 *Ibid*
53. *Foreign Dept Progs.*, Sec. F, June 1902, Nos. 95-103, No 96.
54 *Ibid*
55 Earl of Ronaldshay, *The Life of Lord Curzon* (London, 1928) II, 196
56. G N Curzon, *Russia in Central Asia in 1889 and the Anglo-Russian Question* (London and New York, 1889) 354-5.

that the engagement was not reciprocal because the Amir could call upon the support of the British troops in case of foreign aggression, but otherwise the British could not enter Afghanistan and niether could they have a British Resident at Kabul, nor could they have British agents at the frontier-posts for which they were expected to fight at Amir's summons.[57] The British suffered from these handicaps, in spite of the fact that they paid a subsidy to the Amir Curzon wanted that an attempt should be made to ascertain what were the Afghan obligations to Great Britain[58] George Hamilton had also regarded Abdur Rahman as "a very unsatisfactory man to deal with" and wanted that the British should take care, after the death of Abdur Rahman, to improve and make their relations more workable with his successor[59] Therefore, the Viceroy considered it necessary that the political relations between the two countries should be revised and regulated.[60] Perhaps Curzon's view was to make the Kabul ruler a vassal of the British Government[61]

Therefore, the Government of India made their intention clear by informing the Amir that they had not alluded to the precise terms of the Agreement of 1880 but to the friendship and union between the two Governments which began that year and had continued ever since[62] They had not alluded to the terms of the Agreement of 1880, because that agreement was made with the late Amir personally, and did not necessarily apply to his sons and successors Besides, that agreement was only a part of the arrangements made with Amir Abdur Rahman, and it was obvious from the correspondence of past years that the Governments of India and Afghanistan did not always interpret that agreement in the same way Therefore, if their alliance was to be of real value, it was essential that, in important matters, like the obligations of the British Indian Government towards Afghanistan in case of foreign

57 *Ibid*

58 *Ibid*

59 *Hamilton Papers*, Private Correspondence-India - Hamilton to Elgin, 8 May 1896, Cat No C125/1 3

60 Ronaldshay, II, *op cit*, 196

61 *Ampthill Collection*, Letters from the Secretary of State Private letter from St John Brodrick, 23 March 1905, Cat No E233.

62 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, June 1902, Nos 95-103, No. 102

aggression, the import of arms and ammunitions into Afghanistan, the grant of money to the Afghan Government, and the reciprocal obligations of the Amir's government, there should be complete accord between the two Governments, and they should both clearly understand what their agreements with each other implied They further stated that it was not possible to arrive at such an understanding without a personal discussion Further, the Agreement of 1880 did not mention the subsidy of 12 lakhs of rupees, which was paid annually to the late Amir It was granted in 1883 to the late Amir personally and for a definite object, which was "the payment of the troops of the late Amir, and other measures required for the defence of his north-west frontier."[63] Therefore, the new Amir could not, without a fresh agreement, claim as of right the guarantee of protection given in 1880, or the subsidy of 1883, because there was no promise to continue either to Abdur Rahman's successors. Finally, Lord Curzon wrote that the object that he had in view in asking the Amir to meet him at Peshawar was that they might conclude the new agreements which were indispensable, and that they might come to a clear understanding as to the extent of their respective obligations. The Governor-General gave the Amir to understand that he had no wish to interfere with Afghanistan's internal administration, or to encroach upon the Afghan ruler's territories. He also pointed out that the Indian Government had no intention of pressing upon him any fresh conditions to which the Afghan ruler might be unable or unwilling to agree. But at the same time, the Viceroy did not fail to mention that since the entire northern border of Afghanistan was contiguous to a powerful neighbour at this time, therefore they should meet and discuss the existing position of affairs, and frame their arrangments to meet the altered circumstances.[64]

Besides, Lord Curzon mentioned some other matters like the treatment accorded to the British Agent at Kabul; trade between Afghanistan and India, which he wanted to discuss with the Amir personally, if the Afghan ruler could come to Peshawar in the middle of October.[65] However, the Amir once again informed the Indian Government that he was engaged in the settlement of the

63. *Ibid*.
64. *Ibid.*
65. *Ibid.*

internal affairs of his country [66] He stated that he did not decline the invitation and he did not repudiate the terms of the agreement made with his late father, and he was prepared to come to India at some suitable time [67]

Despite the fact that the task before the Government of India was a difficult and complex one, the British Government was averse to any forward movement [68] They were also against making any communication to the Amir which was likely to aggravate the existing friction between the Governments of India and Afghanistan, or to lead to military operations [69] But Lord Curzon persisted with the matter and renewed his invitation to the Amir because he was keen to secure better terms from the Afghan ruler [70] In reply to the Governor-General's letter of 24 July 1903, the Amir took a firm and stiff attitude and stated that he could not at that time make a definite promise to pay a visit to India [71]

The Government of India believed that so long as the Amir avoided or declined friendly discussions with the Viceroy, their relations with the Afghan ruler would be of a somewhat indeterminate character.[72] Therefore they desired that no effort should be spared for bringing about a confidential interchange of views between the Governor-General and Amir Habibullah, or a suitable representative of the Amir, with the object of placing India's relations with Afghanistan upon an assured and intelligible basis Moreover, they thought that they ought not be driven by the dilatory tactics of the Amir into any admission that the original agreement carried with it the subsidy or that they should forfeit the oportunity afforded to them by a discussion on this point of placing on a more satisfactory basis the relations between India and Afghanistan [73] The Government of India was not willing to grant the subsidy of 12 lakhs of rupees to the new Amir, and they were also in a mood to stop the importation of arms to Afghanistan, in case the Afghan ruler failed to

66 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Jan 1903, Nos 1 35, No 25
67 *Ibid*
68 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Jan, 1903, Nos, 1-35, No 28
69 *Ibid*
70 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Aug 1903, Nos 83-162, No. 87
71 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Feb 1904, Nos 23-32, No 24
72 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Feb 1904, Nos 23 32, No. 25
73 *Ibid*

come to India But the British Government saw grave objections to withholding the subsidy, or part of it, in the event of Afghan ruler's failing to come to India, and to them it seemed that the question of arms stood on the same footing as the subsidy [74] They wanted that the Indian Government should follow a policy that could leave a room for compromise afterwards [75] Regarding Lord Curzon's correspondence with the late Amir about the desirability of promoting railways and telegraphs in Afghanistan, the British Government was doubtful whether anything would be gained by striving to extort from the Kabul ruler railway or road concessions in Afghanistan, for the strategic defence of India. The British Government felt that the Afghan ruler's fidelity to them in case of a difficulty arising between Russia and Great Britain must largely depend upon his belief that the British were more likely to respect his independence than were the Russians. They felt that any policy which would make the Amir alter his view upon this point might be wholly fatal to the British influence in Afghanistan, and might throw the Amir into the arms of Russia.[76] Earlier, it was hoped that Curzon's influence over Abdur Rahman and Habibullah would lead to the establishment of improved relations between the Indian Government and Afghan ruler.[77] But Curzon failed to bring about any change in the Amir's attitude, and annoyed at his failure, he urged the British Government to adopt a more determined attitude towards the Kabul ruler.[78] When Curzon failed to secure something by negotiation, he did not hesitate to obtain it by force.[79] But what the British Government could not achieve by diplomacy they were generally prepared to forego This divergence in approach became the main cause of difference between Lord Curzon's Government and the British Government [80] While the Government of India felt that a strong policy would bring the ruler of Afghanistan to his senses, the British Government felt that the adoption of a policy of compromise was desirable for keeping the Amir under their influence.

74. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec F, Feb 1904, Nos. 23-32, No 26
75. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec F., Feb 1904, Nos 23-32, No 27.
76. *Ibid*
77 Ronaldshay, II, *op cit*, 262.
78. *Ibid.*
79. *Ibid*, 205-6.
80. *Ibid.*

In the opinion of the Viceroy the gains of a possible interview with the Amir outweighed the disadvantages of a refusal on the part of the Kabul ruler to come to India and meet him. Therefore, he once again renewed his invitation to Amir Habibullah to visit India [81] He informed the Amir that it was not desirable or well that they should be perpetually corresponding about the nature or amount of the subsidy that was due, when the real point was the renewal of the Agreement itself, of which the subsidy did not form a part But when the Agreement was renewed, the subsidy would no longer be a source of difficulty.[82]

The Amir in his reply of 1 March 1904, declined the invitation to come to India not directly but by implication [83] In his long letter the Afghan ruler argued that the old agreement was still standing, that there was no need of a new agreement. He further asked that if the old agreement was cancelled, what hope there could be for the permanence of a new one He then developed his interpretation of existing agreements, which was, that the Government of India should provide money and arms, while he would do the fighting He also hinted indirectly that in no circumstances were the British to enter Afghanistan. The Amir stated his intention to meet the Russians in the battle field and gave an account of his military preparations that would enable the Afghans to fight the Russians in hill country. The Kabul ruler felt that the Afghans might be distroyed, because of the insufficiency of their supply of ammunition, in which case the Indian Government would have to regret and repent He further said that he had recently proposed to his people the introduction of protective measures, including railroads and telegraph from Kabul to Herat and Kandahar, but that they would not have them· Finally, he wanted the Viceroy to tell him what Indian Government's arrangements were, regarding Russian danger to Afghanistan and India, and to send him an early reply [84]

The Governor-General felt that this communication seemed to place the future relations of the Government of India with the Amir

81 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F Feb, 1904, Nos 23-32, No 30
82 *Ibid*
83 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F., May 1904, Nos 28-37, No 33.
84. *Ibid*

on a somewhat different basis, and he suggested the undesirability of their continuing to be bound by the obligations to which their ally did not wish to adhere, and which local conditions rendered it impossible to discharge The Viceroy wrote to the Secretary of State for India that in his opinion perhaps the best plan would be to send a brief reply to the effect that, as the Amir was unable to come to India, the invitation was no longer pressed, and that after the Governor-General had consulted the British Government in England, he proposed to send an officer to Kabul in the autumn of 1904 to discuses matters with the Afghan ruler [85] Thus the Amir's non-acceptance of the Viceroy's invitation forced the hands of the Indian and British Governments, and they decided to despatch the Dane Mission to Kabul, in order to bring about a settlement of the causes of friction between the Governments of India and Afghanistan.

The circumstances, which had prompted the Indian Government to advocate a more active policy towards their north-west frontier, were the construction of Russian railways upto the frontiers of Afghanistan, and the Russian attempts at direct communication with the Afghan officials. Russia perhaps wanted to push her influence into Afghanistan as a means of bringing pressure upon England or of punishing her for her antagonism to Russian interests in other parts of the world. In all probability, this attitude of the Government of St Petersburg was an outcome of their belief that Great Britain wanted to impose a veto on Russian expansion in Asia. The fear of Russian activities had prompted the Government of India to make endeavours to intensify their schemes of strengthening the frontier defences, and to keep Afghanistan, Southern Persia and Tibet, as closely as possible, in their sphere of influence. The situation on the Russo-Afghan frontier was so indeterminate that it became a source of great anxiety to the Indian Government. On 6 February 1900, Lord Salisbury received from the Russian Embassy in London a memorandum, which indicated a change in the attitude of the Czar's Government towards Afghanistan.[86] The Russian Government stated that the contiguity of frontiers, the construction of the Trans-Caspian Railway, and the peaceful development

85. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec F , May 1904, Nos. 28-37, No 35.
86 *Foreign Dept. Progs* , Sec. F., May 1905, Nos 154-78, No 154.

of intercourse between the Russian dominions and Afghanistan had entirely modified the conditions under which it had been possible for St Petersburg to acquiesce in maintaining an abnormal situation by foregoing all direct relations with Afghanistan. The Russians believed that the time had come to take a definite step in regularising the situation and they considered it indispensable that direct relations should be established with Afghanistan in respect of frontier matters. At the same time, they gave the British Government to understand that these relations would be of a non-political character, as the Russian Government maintained their former arrangements with the British, and continued to regard Afghanistan as being outside the Russian sphere of influence.[87]

In June 1900, the Indian Government forwarded a letter to the British Government, written by the Russian Political Agent in Bokhara Mos Ignatieff to the Afghan Commercial Agent, which had been sent to them in original by the Amir. In that letter the Russian official had expressed a desire that his letter might be the first step towards the establishment of direct friendly relations between Afghanistan and Russia, and assured that his Government had no hostile feelings towards Afghanistan. He also offered explanations as to the movements of Russian troops in Trans-Caspia, which had, he wrote, attracted attention primarily because they coincided with the continued reverses of the British armies in south Africa.[88]

On 22 October 1901, M De Staal, in his conversation with Marquess of Lansdowne urged the necessity of direct communication upon purely local and commercial matters between Russia and Afghanistan.[89] But the one object of British policy for the last thirty or thirty five years had been to prevent a combination of the Russians and Afghans, and to seek and secure the cooperation of the Afghans against Russia.[90] Therefore, the British Government, in view of their position as being responsible for the external relations of Afghanistan, held that the arrangements for that purpose could only be made with their consent, and that the proposals upon the subject would only be entertained by the Afghan ruler if brought

87 *Ibid*
88 *Ibid*
89 *Ibid*
90 *Hamilton Collection*, Private Correspondence-India- Hamilton to Curzon, 29 Oct and 27 Nov 1902, Cat No CI26/1-5.

forward and recommended by them.[91] But before efforts were made to frame any such proposals, it seemed essential that the British Government should receive more precise explanations in regard to the method which the Russians would desire to see adopted for the exchange of such communications between the frontier officials, the limitations to be placed upon them, and the means of insuring that those limits would be observed.

On 5 February 1903, a note recieved by Sir C. Scott from the Russian Ministry for foreign affairs urged that the relations which till 1900 had existed between Russia and Afghanistan must be given a straightforward open character, and that this, naturally, did not exclude the possibility of despatching Russian Agents into Afghanistan in the future. However, the Russian note concluded with a declaration that it was by no means intended to invest the question with a political character, and that the sending of Russian Agents to Afghanistan was not then contemplated.[92]

After some time, important events took place on the Russo-Afghan frontier due to the destruction of certain boundary pillars near Herat, and also due to a dispute in connection with water supply. It was proposed to the Czar's Government that one of the British officers of the Mission engaged in the delimitation of the Perso-Afghan boundary in Seistan should be sent to the Herat frontier to verify the facts, with a view to restoring the pillars, and that St. Petersburg Government should depute an officer of suitable rank to meet him on the frontier and cooperate with him in arranging a settlement. It was also suggested that the Russian Government should direct their frontier officials to communicate through the British Consulate at Meshed in case of such difficulties and incidents in future. However, in June 1903, the Government of India received the information that letters had been received by the Governor or Herat from the Governors of Trans-Caspia, Ashkabad, Panjdeh and other Russian frontier officials; that on 7 and 8 June two parties of Russian Turkoman sowars had arrived at Herat bearing such letters, but that the Governor had forwarded those letters, to the Amir for orders.[93] The Amir communicated to

91. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., May 1905, Nos. 154-78, No. 154.
92. *Ibid.*
93. *Ibid.*

the Indian Government the originals of the letters addressed to the Governor of Herat by the Russian frontier authorities. At the same time, Amir Habibullah once again assured the Government of India that in frontier matters he had no desire to hold written correspondence in any way with the Russian Government, but that they should confer with Russia on his behalf [94]

The Russians did not accept the British proposal and declined to depute their representative to meet and co-operate with a British officer who was to be despatched to Heart frontier without delay.[95] They also refused to accept the suggestion that the British Consulate-General at Meshed should serve as a temporary channel for Russo-Afghan communications [96] The Indian and British Governments proceeded with their arrangements in connection with the immediate despatch of a British officer to the Russo-Afghan frontier. The Russian Government was once again informed that preparations had been made for the despatch of a British officer to arrange with the Afghan officials for the restoration of pillars; but that the Government of India would prefer that as they had been originally constructed by British and Russian representatives, the work of restoration should, on this occasion also, be executed in co-operation by the two Governments But the Czar's Government once again refused to consider the British proposals [97] However, the talks between the two Governments were resumed after sometime, but they also proved infructuous in giving shape to a formal agreement between the two Powers regarding Afghanistan.

In the meantime the Indian Government had deputed Mr. H R C. Dobbs as Political Officer to the Herat frontier for the restoration of certain boundary pillars there. The main object of the Government of India was to frustrate the Russian attempts at direct negotiations with the Afghans. but the refusal of the Government of St. Petersburg to cooperate with the British representative in restoring the boundary pillars complicated the matter Dobbs informed the Indian Government that after his discussions with the Governor of Herat, and after observing the local feeling, he felt certian that it

94 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Feb 1904, Nos 40-183, No 85
95 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, May 1905, Nos 154-78, No 154.
96 *Ibid*
97 *Ibid*

would be regarded a formal initiation of the policy of direct Afghan communication with Russia, and the total abandonment of the Indian claim to controlling the external relations of Afghanistan, if under their instruction he was to advise the Afghans to approach Russia direct for officially recording the restoration of pillars.[98] He further ventured to suggest that they might secure diplomatic victory, if the Afghan representative and he constituted themselves as silent supervisors of the Russian task of repairing the pillars, in which case no direct communication between the Afghan and Russian representatives need take place.[99] The Government of India approved this suggestion of Mr. Dobbs in their telegram of 12 November 1903.[100]

It seems quite probable that the Russian policy towards Afghanistan, at this time, was motivated by the considerations of their position in the Far East Japan was acquiring a dominating position in that region, and in order to assure victory, Russia wanted to isolate Japan, and to make the war in the Far East a Russo-Japanese duel.[101] Perhaps the Government of St Petersburg thought that if they consolidated their influence in Afghanistan, their eventual advance close to the Indian frontier would pose a grave threat to the British Empire, and the realisation that a mobilisation of the Anglo-Japanese fleet in the Yellow Sea would be accompanied by a simultaneous advance of Russian troops on the Indian frontier which would keep England neutral in case of a conflagaration in the Far-East.[102] Therefore, in order to effect an early solution of the Far-Eastern question, the Russians directed all their endeavours towards establishing intimate and close relations with the Amir.[103] This prompted the Government of India to advocate a more active policy towards their north-west frontier, and to pursue their defence schemes with greater zeal. The Indian Government wanted a more active prosecution of the policy of extending friendly influence and control over the tribes on the Indian side of the border upto the Durand line, where it was desirable for strategic reasons.[104] This

98. *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F., Feb 1904, Nos. 40/183 No. 91-
99. *Ibid*
100. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., Feb 1904, Nos. 40-183, No. 98
101. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F, July 1904, Nos. 31-149, Enclo. 1 in No. 55.
102. *Ibid.*
103. *Ibid*
104. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Aug 1904, Nos. 83-7, No. 87.

policy led to a great deal of misunderstanding and friction between the Indian and Afghan Governments, which were ultimately cleared by the work of the Dane Mission at Kabul.

In 1904, because of the closer proximity of the Russians to Kabul, threatened by the completion of the Orenburg-Samarkand Railway and the commencement of the extension to Termez on the River Oxus, the Indian Government urged the Secretary of State for India for permission to undertake a railway survey for converting the narrow-guage into broad-guage line from Kohat to Thal and to extend the railway up the Kurram from Thal to Parachinar.[105] The Government of India desired to commence the survey at once, and the proposal was approved by the Secretary of State for India in his telegram of 22 September 1904.[106] Earlier to this the Indian Government had constructed the railway line to Dargai, they had continued the line from Peshawar to Jamrud, and they had taken the railroad from Kushalgarh to Kohat.[107] Moreover, they had also opened the Kohat Pass.[108]

The Government of India's conviction that a war on the north-west frontier would mainly involve the problem of transport and supply was largely responsible for the extension of roads and rail raods towards the Afghan frontier. Lord Curzon was a stern believer in the theory that military advance on Kabul and transport of troops and supplies would depend only upon adopting a broad and bold policy of construction of roads and railroad.[109] But for the restraint exercised by the Government of St. James, the policy of the Government of India during this period would have created a serious rift with the Afghan ruler. Curzon wanted to make an emphatic declaration of this policy. But under the pressure of the British Government, the Indian Government was forced to follow a policy of conciliation towards Afghanistan, and it was this policy alone which helped to bring about a considerable improvement in the Indo-Afghan relations. As far back as May 1903, Hamilton had

105 *Foreign Dept Progs*., Sec F., March 1905, Nos 407-12, No 407
106 *Foreign Dept Progs*., Sec F., March 1905, Nos 407-12, No 408
107 G.N. Curzon, Earl of Kedleston, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, *Speeches*, II, 1900-1902 (Calcutta, 1902) 486-7
108 *Ibid*
109 *Foreign Dept Progs*., Sec Sept. 1904, Nos 1-20, Notes

informed Curzon that the most important object of British policy was to reestablish friendliest possible relations with the Kabul ruler and the Afghan Government [110] In order to secure Afghan ruler's permanent friendship he was prepared to cajole and grant concessions to the Amir, hence the tone and language of all communications sent to the Amir was to be guided by that paramount object of British policy [111]

Therefore, to relieve tension in the existing Indo-Afghan relations the British Government decided to despatch the Dane Mission to Kabul in 1904, which led to a restatement of existing agreements with the late Amir in the form of a treaty This treaty was proposed by Habibullah, renewing without alteration or addition the engagements which had existed between his father and the Government of India.[112] The conciliatory policy of the British Government which prompted the acceptance by Mr Dane of Amir's draft of the treaty helped to restore friendly relations between India and Afghanistan for a time. It did also succeed, to a considerable extent, in appeasing the Afghan ruler and removing most of the causes of misunderstanding and friction between the two Governments.

The Indian Government believed that it was not desirable that important differences between the two states should any longer remain unsettled. They also felt that their indefinite postponment would be injurious to the interests of the two countries. Hence, the Governor-General of India put forward a proposal to the Amir that some high officer of the Indian Government might be deputed to communicate the views and sentiments of the Government of India to the Ruler of Afghanistan and to converse with him in person.[113] The Afghan ruler was informed that on hearing from him the Indian Government would "take steps to select an officer of the highest rank to represent their views, ..."[114] The Government of India did not, however, conceal their partiality for a personal meeting between the Amir and the Viceroy.[115] But Amir Habibullah

110. *Hamilton Collection*, Private Correspondence India-Hamilton to Curzon, 22 may 1903, Cat No. C126/1 5.
111 *Ibid*
112 *Foreign Dept Progs* , Sec F , June 1905, Nos 105-6, No. 105.
113 *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec F., Oct 1904, Nos 233 71, No. 238.
114. *Ibid.*
115 *Ibid*

preferred to receive the Indian Government's representative at Kabul and confer with him about matters of mutual benefit, and informed the Viceroy that the said officer would be permitted to bring with him one hundred of his dependents, servants, and followers [116] The Amir also enquired the date on which the said officer would start, so that he might inform his frontier officers [117]

Subsequently, the Government of India decided to despatch Mr. L W Dane on this Mission to Kabul In his letter of 22 October 1904, the Viceroy informed the Amir about the selection of Mr. Dane[118] for carrying on a discussion with him on all questions concerning joint interests of India and Afghanistan. In his letter of 28 October, Dane further furnished the Afghan ruler with a list of the officers selected to accompany him to Kabul, and informed the Amir that it was proposed not to send any British escort with the party He intended to take with him only a few personal orderlies, but the total strength of his party came to about 300 persons. He hoped to start from Peshawar about 25 November 1904 [119] Dane entered Afghanistan on 28 November 1904. He received no formal instructions regarding his Mission to Kabul, but for his guidance he was furnished unofficially with the copies of despatches exchanged between the Indian Government and the Secretary of State [120] These were supplemented by telegrams from the Secretary of State and letters by the Government of India on various related subjects.[121] The British Government, in consultation with Lord Curzon, sent instructions in the form of an *Aide-Memoire* for the guidance of Mr. Dane during the negotiations His Majesty's Government was of the opinion that the real value to them of Afghanistan lay not in the efficiency of her army, "but in the barrier against a Russian advance created by the geographical position and physical configuration of the country "[122] Lord Kitchener, in his Minute of 7 October 1904, had pointed out that the defence of India was the primary object of friendly relations with Afghanistan, and therfore

116 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Oct 1904, Nos 233-71, No 256
117. *Ibid*
118 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Jan 1905, Nos 34 136, No 47
119 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Jan 1905, Nos 34 136, No 58
120. *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F, July 1905, Nos 61-72, No. 61
121 *Ibid*
122. *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Jan 1905, Nos 34-136, No 74

military considerations should outweigh all others in the agreement which they might negotiate with the Afghan ruler.[123] Lord Ampthill's Government also "agreed that the primary object of those negotiations should be the conclusion of alliance with Afghanistan definitely founded on military consideration".[124] But the British Government believed that the risks involved in proposing to the Kabul ruler a scheme of military co operation in which the British were to have a preponderating voice were greater than they were prepared to accept.[125] Therefore, they informed the Government of India that they had decided that, so far as external relations and the question of their guarantee of Afghanistan against foreign aggression was concerned, it would be preferable to approach the Afghan ruler with the proposals for renewing, without material alteration, the engagements with the late Amir Abdur Rahman. All they wanted was that Dane should sound the Amir regarding such questions as an occasional deputation, when circumstances made it desirable, of English officers to Afghanistan, the survey of the country beyond Kabul for military purposes, and the construction of telegraph lines.[126] In addition to these general matters there were certain questions which concerned directly the interests of the Government of India in its relations with the Kabul ruler, These affected the preservation of order on the Durand line, the treatment of the Agents at Kabul and other places His Majesty's Government was definitely of the view that befor the existing political engagements were renewed, a satisfactory understanding must be arrived at with Amir Habibullah on the points mentioned in paragraph 13 of the *Aide-Memoire*.[127] In spite of the fact that His Majesty's Government held the view that the Agreements with Amir Abdur Rahman were personal, they felt that the provisions regarding the subsidy and arms should be renewed, provided Amir Habibullah met them fairly in the negotiations. But they wanted a change in the form of agreement, so that the engagements made with the late Amir concerning his foreign relations should be embodied in a formal treaty with the new Amir, to be signed by both the contrac-

123 *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec F, Oct 1904, Nos 233-71, No. 271, Enclosure 1.

124 *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec F, Jan 1905, Nos 34-136, No. 43.

125. *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Jan. 1905, Nos. 34-136, No 74.

126 *Ibid.*

127. *Ibid*, Please refer to *Appendix A* for Paragraph 13 of the *Aide-Memoire*.

ting parties, as such a treaty would strengthen their position and the Amir's against Russian interference. They also felt that such a treaty made personally with the present ruler would involve no real increase in their responsibilities; it would merely emphasise the Amir's obligations. Moreover, from the point of view of Great Britain's diplomatic relations with St Petersburg, the signing of a formal treaty would leave no room for doubt in respect of British relations with Afghanistan and their obligations in the event of a foreign power resorting to action inconsistent with the basic principle of the alliance Further, they thought that, as in the case of foreign relations, it would be desirable to make personal the agreements on other points also.[128]

The *Aide-Memoire*, prepared in consultation with Lord Curzon, was to some extent a source of disappointment to Ampthill's Government, because it had been anxious for a formal military convention, which found no favour with His Majesty's Government [129]

Besides the *Aide-Memoire*, Dane was also given a copy of the draft Treaty which he was expected to conclude with the Amir. But the Afghan ruler's stiff attitude, dilatory tactics and evasive replies considerably hampered the smooth progress of the negotiations. On 26 December 1904, the Amir replied to Dane's *resume* of the subjects touched during the conversation on 22 December.[130] The Kabul ruler's reply did not deal with any of the points discussed except saying that this was not the occasion for checking advance of outlaws, but for stopping advance of Russia. Besides, the Amir stated that he had accepted the proposal for Dane's deputation, because the Viceroy had informed him that the King-Emperor agreed with him as to the necessity of repelling Russia's aggression, and that Dane was to discuss ways and means to achieve that end only, and not the renewal of agreements Habibullah maintained that the agreements did not require renewal, but said that he was willing to carry out all obligations entered into by the late Amir. He further added that if the agreements had lapsed, there was no need for the British representative to discuss the various questions with him, and there was no need for him to give any answers.

128. *Ibid*

129 *Ampthill Collection*, Secret Memo on Afghanistan by St. J Brodrick, Secretary of State for India, Page 11, 12 Aug. 1905, Cat No E233.

130 *Foreign Dept Progs.*, Sec. F , May 1905, Nos 1-141, No. 5.

According to Dane, until the interview of 22 December, there was every sign that the Afghan ruler would agree to the renewal of agreement Dane regarded the change in Habibullah's attitude as being influenced by the limitations imposed on the import of munitions of war by him. Moreover, the question of constricting his discretion in the matter of his external relations also agitated him. Further, probably the Amir had come to realise that the lapse of former agreement would deprive him of any claim to the arrears of the subsidy as a matter of right But Dane informed the Kabul ruler that, firstly, the Amir was under a misapprehension as to the object of his deputation; and secondly, that the engagements with his father had always been treated as personal, and the orders of the British Government did not allow him to admit a contrary interpretation. At the same time Dane told him that the British Government were prepared to conclude engagements similar to those that existed with Abdur Rahman, and suggested that the form and nature of the engagements to be concluded with the Amir should now be discussed in a friendly and reasonable spirit.[131]

But the Kabul ruler's continued non-cooperative attitude made the Government of India feel that the present deadlock at Kabul was due to a misunderstanding. They thought that the Amir's unwillingness to accept their draft treaty, and his contention that the previous agreements were still operative were due to the fact that Dane had not till then told the Afghan ruler that if he accepted the draft treaty and the terms of subsidiary agreement, he would receive the same subsidy as the late Amir, with arrears. Therefore, the British representative was asked to make these intentions known to Habibullah as soon as possible, but at the same time he was to maintain that the arrears would not be claimed as of right and that reasonable *quid pro quo* was required. The British expected that if the Amir came to know of their intentions his attitude would mollify.[132]

However, the British expectations were belied. There was no modification in the Amir's attitude and the deadlock continued. In fact the Kabul ruler put forward a treaty drafted by him for acceptance by the British Government. Since the negotiations were not

131. *Ibid.*

132. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., May 1905, Nos. 1-141, No. 22.

making progress, Dane suggested to the Indian Government that he should return to India to represent the situation, and they were prepared to agree to it [133] His Majesty's Government held the view that the breaking off of negotiations would be most undesirable; and in these circumstances the only alternative seemed to be to accept the settlement on the lines of Habibullah's draft treaty, in which would be incorporated a plain narration of engagements set forth in the British draft [134] They had an apprehension that the interruption of negotiations would not advance their interest, and keeping in view the Russian preparations at Tashkent, it might precipitate St Petersburg's action The Secretary of State for India hoped that the Viceroy would consider the problem in all its aspects, and let him know whether failure to realise the objects set forth in paragraph 13 of the *Aide-Memoire* should be permitted to break the negotiations [135]

The attitude of the Afghans was rigid on the permanence of the agreements, and Dane was doubtful whether they would go back on it even if an ultimatum were given [136] Besides, he was sceptical whether any real or lasting improvement was possible in the Afghan attitude respecting other matters [137] The Government of India regarded the Amir's terms as irreconcileable with the instructions of the British Government upon which they had been acting, fatal to British prestige in Afghanistan, and dangerous to Indian interests [138] Therefore, they advised His Majesty's Government that Dane should be authorised to restate their offer to the Afghan ruler in courteous but firm terms, and to inform him that, unless the discussion was resumed without delay on the basis of their draft treaty and subsidiary agreement, the Mission would leave Kabul on a certain date The Indian Government thought that such firmness would be fruitful but even if it led to a break down of negotiations in the long run it would be preferable to complete surrender. In case the British Government disagreed with them and required them to compromise, the following appeared to them the maximum

133 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, May 1905, Nos 1-141, No 78
134 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, May 1905, Nos, 1-141, No 83
135 *Ibid*
136 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, May 1905, Nos 1-141, No 92
137 *Ibid*
138 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, May 1905, Nos, 1-141, No 95.

that might be conceded without loss of face.[139]

(1) Dane might sign an agreement similar to that of July 1880, on the condition that the Amir signed an acceptance in identical terms to that signed by the late Afghan ruler. The Amir was not precluded from holding direct correspondence with British or Russian officers on purely local or non-political matters. The copies of such correspondence with the Russians should be supplied to the Indian Government, but if the Amir had any strong objection to it, they would not press for it.

(2) Both might reaffirm the Durand Agreement of 1893.

(3) The Government of India could not accept the Amir's draft treaty. They deprecated acquiescence in the Amir's assumption of independent sovereignty. Further, they wanted that the heading of the treaty should be similar to that of the Durand Agreement.

But they wanted that before any of these agreements or treaty was signed, they must insist that the Amir should give a clear undertaking that he would implicitly observe the Durand Agreement in so far as its terms related to the tribes as well as the territories on the British side of the Durand boundary. Besides, they wanted that the Kabul ruler should be pressed to concede rail-head at Kam Dakka in return for territorial concession elsewhere, and permit news-writers in the neighbourhood of Russo-Afghan frontier; but they were not prepared to treat either of these as the *sine qua non*. If the Amir did not agree to these terms, they would instruct Dane to withdraw from Afghanistan.[140]

The British Government could not contemplate Dane's withdrawal without grave concern, which they thought might be avoided without sacrificing the main objects of the Mission.[141] According to them the most important point was that the Amir's draft was based on his acceptance of the obligations undertaken by his father. It was clear that they could not at the moment obtain his agreement to any other subsidiary questions; but they should not be sticklers after form if control over Afghan ruler's foreign relations was secured. Further, they informed the Viceroy that since they

139. *Ibid.*
140. *Ibid.*
141. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec F, May 1905, Nos. 1-141, No. 114.

could obtain substantially a renewal of the late Amir's engagements, which for more than twenty years had operated with great advantage they were not prepared to go to the length of breaking off negotiations If Dane withdrew without any agreement the Amir would be free to foster trouble on the Indo-Afghan frontier, or turn to Russia It was quite likely that much time might pass before the Afghan ruler realised what he was sacrificing in refusing an agreement with the British But in the meantime, the effect of his departure from the position of a friend and subsidised ally, who had placed his foreign relations in British hands, on England's prestige would be deleterious Moreover, if a Russian mission appeard at Kabul, it might lead to consequences of the most serious nature. For these reasons His Majesty's Government held the view that Dane should not withdraw without entering into any agreement which the Amir proposed to sign, for the treaty was calculated to relieve them of considerable anxiety and dangers which might otherwise occur Regarding the personal nature of the engagements, the British Government were distinctly of the opinion that by accepting Habibullah's draft they did not necessarily abandon the position which the Viceroy had taken on this subject Besides, the title assumed by the Amir in his draft treaty should not be regarded as making any real change in his status which might be productive of any future injury to British interests. The British Cabinet held the view that the main object of the Mission would be attained when the Amir had signed his draft treaty As the Afghan ruler would bind himself thereby to observe the Durand Agreement in respect of tribes, they could show their displeasure at any time if he violated the treaty, by stopping the subsidy and the import of arms In the Amir's present state of mind they thought it impossible to raise again the question of news-writers, or to ask for a distinct undertaking regarding the tribes, or for a rail-head at Kam Dakka. Regarding the arrears of subsidy the British felt that they could not withhold it from the Amir.[142] Thus the realisation that the negotiations between Habibullah and Dane had reached a deadlock, and that withdrawal of the British representative might be fruitful of danger to their cause, [143] softened the British Government's attitude to a considerable extent, and they showed their willingness to grant

142 *Ibid*

143 *Foreign Dept Progs , Sec , F., May 1905, Nos. 1-141, No. 19.*

certain concessions to the Amir. But there were differences between Lord Curzon and His Majestys, Government as to the terms to be asked of the Kabul ruler [141] Curzon was of the opinion that the subsidy and the free passage of arms, which the British had the authority to give or refuse, should be held up as trump cards till the issues relating to the frontier incidents and other subsidiary matters had been satisfactorily resolved [145] He believed that it would not be possible to obtain anything once they had signed the agreement.[146] But later developments made it clear that Amir Habibullah was unwilling to transact any business, until the treaty question was settled.[147]

However, the Secretary of State for India wanted that Dane should be instructed to inform the Afghan ruler that his proposal to renew Abdur Rahman's engagements had been forwarded to the British Government, who had agreed to it, and authorised Dane to sign it.[148] Moreover, Dane was not to mention any subsidiary matters till the draft treaty was signed. But if the Amir asked for further concessions and created difficulties about signing his own draft, Dane was to explain that, unless the draft was signed, he had been ordered to terminate the negotiations and return to India to report to the Viceroy.[149]

The Government of India regretted that their views had not commended themselves to His Majesty's Government, and before instructing Dane according to Secretary of States' definite instructions, they made a further representation to the British Government to reconsider their views in the light of certain points which they submitted to them [150] The British Government stuck to their opinion that the Amir's offer should be accepted because the alternative was the almost certain breakdown of the negotiations, which would result in the public interruption of those friendly relations with the Kabul

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144 *Ampthill Collection*, Secret Memo on Afghanistan by St John Brodrick, Secretary of State for India, Page 11, 12 August 1905, Cat No. E233.
145 *Ibid.*
146. *Ibid*
147 *Ibid*
148. *Foreign Dept. Progs* , Sec. F., May 1905, Nos. 1-141, No. 114.
149. *Ibid*
150. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., May 1905, Nos. 1-141, No. 115.

ruler which it was the express object of the negotiations to advance [151] Besides, it would also result in the loss of British control over Afghanistan's foreign relations Moreover, His Majesty's Government did not consider that the signing of the Amir's draft involved any surrender of the points on which the Viceroy had laid stress In deference to the views of the Governor-General, the British Government was willing to press upon the Kabul ruler the subsidiary points, but the situation had materially changed during the course of the negotiations, which made Habibullah suspicious of British intentions, and intensified his unwillingness to sign any agreements which went beyond those undertaken by Abdur Rahman Therefore the British Government desired that the subsidiary matters must yield to the renewal of the former engagements They further insisted that Dane should be instructed to do all in his power to facilitate the signing of the draft treaty by the Amir and even to persuade him by friendly methods to do so [152]

The Government of India was not happy with the policy and the arguments of the British Government, and the differences between the view points of the two were still quite marked The Indian Government could tolerate no compromise on the Amir's claim for independence of Afghanistan and his freedom to have direct relations with foreign powers Further, they insisted on the repudiation of Afghan ruler's interpretation regarding his relations with the tribes Regarding subsidiary points the Viceroy held the views that the *Aide-Memoire* must form the basis of their policy as, after its issue under the instructions of His Majesty's Government, it represented the views not of an individual, but the considered policy of the British Cabinet [153]

Perhaps this representation was not without effect for a shift in British Government's position from its earlier stand is discernible in the lengthy correspondence with the Government of India. It appears that the British Government no longer cherished the ideal of a strong and friendly Afghanistan, because the stronger it became the more difficult would it be to manage, but desired a weak and friendly Afghanistan [154] The Secretary of State, St. John Brodrick

151 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, May 1905, Nos 1-141, No. 133
152 *Ibid*
153 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, May 1905, Nos 1-141, No. 134
154 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, Jan 1905, Nos 34-136, Notes, P 57.

had written to Lord Ampthill that one military views was that Afghanistan would prove a better buffer state if there were less roads, telegraphs, cultivation and supplie [illegible] Ultimately, in spite of differences the Indian Government informed the Secretary of State for India that they were instructing Dane to act according to the views of His Majesty's Government.[156]

Dane was able to conclude the treaty with the Amir on 21 March 1905, and the members of the Kabul mission returned to Landi Kotal on 9 April. The views of Lord Curzon's Government and the British Government differed regarding the assessment of the results obtained. Curzon considered the whole thing "an abject and humiliating surrender."[157] The treaty concluded by Dane appeared to the Indian Government as having violated the essential condition, namely, of being personal, and therefore, limited in application.[158]

However, the British Government maintained that their main object in securing the mission to Kabul was to renew the engagements, which had been concluded with the late Amir, and thus to secure for themselves, in return for a subsidy, the control of the foreign relations of the Afghan Government; and the recognition of the Indo-Afghan boundary settled by the Durand Agreement.[159] His Majesty's Government considered that, while an agreement with them was the best security for the Afghan ruler against the disintegration of his Kingdom, a war with the Amir would be calamitous both for India and the British Empire.[160] However, the best achievement of the mission was that the Amir appeared to have been left in a friendly and favourable state of mind, and such an attitude was in itself very valuable.[161] Thus, by the Agreement of 1905 old engagements were renewed and their essential features were maintained.[162] In main the agreements of 1880 and 1893 embodied three points. Firstly,

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155 *Ampthill Collection*, St J Brodrick, Secretary of State for India to Lord Ampthill, Acting Viceroy, 25 July 1904, No 34, Cat. No E233

156 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, May 1905, Nos 1-141, No. 134

157. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec F, May 1905, Nos. 448-557, Notes.

158 *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., June 1905, Nos 105 6, Notes

159. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F, June 1905, Nos 105-6, No 105.

160 *Ibid*

161. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F, July 1905, Nos. 61-72, No. 64.

162. *Please refer to Appendices B and C.*

the foreign relations of Afghanistan were to be under the guidance and control of the British Government. Secondly, the British were to take upon themselves a definite obligation to come to Afghanistan's aid in case of unprovoked foreign aggression. Thirdly, the British were not to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan The Agreement of 1905 also secured these essential features, and the vagueness of the language which had existed in earlier engagements, and which had prompted the two parties to interpret those engagements in their own way, continued in the agreement of 1905 also

8

Conclusion

THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN CONVENTION 1907

The Dane Mission to Kabul and the Amir's visit to India had brought about a better understanding between the Afghan ruler and the Indian Government. But the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention again led to tension in the relations between the Governments of Afghanistan and India. However, there were many important considerations which brought about the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian *Entente* in 1907. The immediate object of the British was to check the infiltration of Russian influence into Afghanistan, Persia and Tibet, and "to facilitate the defence of India by creating sanitary cordons.....".[1] Davies rightly observes that the real cause of the Anglo-Russian Convention was the growing German danger in Asia and elsewhere.[2] The British "were alarmed by the prospect of a Russo-German Alliance, and of a subsequent European coalition into which France would be incorporated almost by force."[3] In 1902 the Germans got from Turkey the right to construct a railway which would connect Baghdad and the Persian Gulf with the Anatolian line which was already under Germany's control.[4] The construction of this rail-road went on for two years and it was already completed through Konia and Eregli as far as Bulgurli by 1904,[5] when the British and Russian protests put a stop to its further extension. Thus besides Russia

1 Harold Nicolson, *Sir Aurthur Nicolson, First Lord Carnock, A Study in the Old Diplomacy* (London, 1930) 234.
2 Davies, *op. cit* , 172
3 Nicolson, *op. cit.*, 234.
4. Melvin C. Wren, *The Course of Russian History* (New York, 1958) 514.
5. Rostovsky, *op cit.*, 249.

and Britain, Germany also was involved in Asia, due to her economic interests and railway undertakings in Asiatic Turkey and the Far East[6] Therefore, the problem of Berlin-Baghdad Railway with its intended extension to the Persian Gulf, the increasing strength of the German fleet, and Germany's expanding economic imperialism in the Near East, which posed a threat to Russian and British trade there, and some other important factors prompted the two Powers to patch up their differences in Central Asia.

The Czar's Government had taken advantage of the British entanglements in the Boer War, and had strengthened its influence in Northern Persia In Afghanistan the Russians were making attempts to open direct correspondence with Kabul ruler. Thus in 1900 there was a revival of the Afghan question, at a critical juncture when the British were engaged in the war in South Africa.[7] The friction in Afghanistan, Persia and Tibet had aggravated the tension between the Governments of St Petersburg and London; and the commencement of war in the Far East "opened a period of dangerousstrain"[8] The Russian Covernment's Memorandum of 6 February 1900, stated that "the time had come to take a definite step towards the regularisation of Russia's relations with Afghanistan "[9] Therefore the Government at St. Petersburg considered it to be its duty to inform the British Government that it regarded as indispensable the reestablishment of direct relations between Russia and Afghanistan, so far as frontier matters were concerned They also informed that these relations would have no political character, and they would continue to regard Afghanistan as being outside the sphere of Russian influence. They further wrote that the regularisation of their dealings with Afghanistan would exercise a wholesome effect on the strengthening of the friendly relations between the Russians and the British.

The Russian Government's Memorandum of 5 February 1903, said that they still adhered to the terms of the Memorandum of 6

6 Archibald R. Colquhoun, *Russia against India The Struggle for Asia* (London and New York, 1900) 227

7 William Habberton, *Anglo-Russian Relations Concerning Afghanistan* 1837-1907 (Urbana, 1937) 68

8. Ward and Gooch, III,*op. cit* , 330,

9 *Foreign Dept. Progs* , Sec F , January 1907, Nos 37-52, No. 37.

February 1900.[10] In their Memorandum of 20 August 1903, the Russians refused to accept the British Government's proposal to co-operate in the restoration of the Russo-Afghan boundary pillars, because they claimed direct communication with the Afghan authorities for the settlement of all frontier matters.[11] But the British Government regarded the restoration of boundary pillars as a political matter, and was not willing to permit the Russians to have direct relations with the Afghans regarding that question. Therefore, the Russian note of 5 October 1903, once again refused to co-operate with the British in that matter, and declined further discussion regarding the question of direct Russo-Afghan relations,[12] which led to the development of an Anglo-Russian crisis. However, the extremely conciliatory nature of later exchanges relaxed the tension between the two Powers to a considerable extent at a time when the chances of Russo-Japanese War seemed imminent in the Far East. The discussions that followed resulted in oral suggestions to the Russian Ambassador by Lord Lansdowne.[13] He expected the Russians to recognise in the most formal manner the position of Afghanistan as being entirely within the British sphere of influence and controlled by them in respect of its external policy.[14] Subject to this condition he was prepared to admitth at there might be direct communication between Russian and Afghan officials regarding matters of purely local and non-political complexion. Such correspondence was to take place only between officials connected with the local administration of affairs adjoining the two frontiers, Besides, any arrangement come to was to be subject to the concurrence of the Amir; and the Russians were to abstain from sending agents into Afghanistan.[15]

But the outbreak of Russo-Japanese War in February 1904, interrupted the negotiations aimed at a general understanding on all questions between England and Russia. Further, between 1900 and 1905, some important developments had occurred in the realm of diplomacy, which had a bearing on the relations of Great Britain

10. *Ibid.*
11. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., May 1905, Nos. 154-78, No. 154.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec. F., Jan 1907, Nos. 37-52, No. 37.
14. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., May 1905, Nos. 154-78, No. 157.
15. *Ibid.*

and Russia In 1902 the British Government abandoned its policy of isolation and concluded a treaty with Japan, and that Anglo-Japanese Alliance was subsequently renewed and modified in 1905. This was done for "the maintenance of peace in East Asia and India, preservation of the independence and integrity of China, of the principle of the 'open door', and of mutual defence of the territorial rights and interests of Japan and Britain in East Asia. This involved the possibility of armed assistance by the other party, if either Korea or the Indian frontier were attacked."[16] In 1904 England entered into an *Entente Cordiale* with France, which was a Russian ally after 1894 The Anglo-French *Entente* was considered by some people in France as a better safeguard of peace than any other[17] at this time These developments along with the growing German menace, Russia's defeat at the hands of Japan, and her internal troubles were perhaps the determining factors which motivated Russia's approach towards Great Britain. On the other side, the uncertain behaviour of the Amir towards the Indo-British Government, and Great Britain's concern at the growing strength of the German fleet were perhaps the important factors which prompted the British to come to a friendly understanding with Russia at an early date Since Afghanistan was a pawn on the chess-board of European diplomacy and since there had been a shift in the power-politics of Europe, it seemed desirable for the British and Russian Governments to come to an understanding regarding Afghanistan as well. The *Ententes* with France and Russia were concluded in order to remove constant danger of war with those Powers.[18] The Anglo-French *Entente*, concluded by Lansdowne in 1904, was an important step towards the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian *Entente* of 1907, because it was not possible for Great Britain to be friendly towards France while remaining at enemity with her ally, namely Russia[19] In the words of Sir Edward Grey "an agreement with Russia was the natural complement of the agreement with France, it was also the only practical alter-

16 Blanche E C Dugdale, *Arthur James Balfour-First Earl of Balfour* (London, 1936) I, 389.

17 *The Times*, Wednesday, 3 July 1907.

18 G M Trevelyan, *Grey of Fallodon-Life of Sir Edward Grey* (London, 1937) 111.

19 *Ibid*, 181

native to the old policy of drift, with its continual complaints, bickerings, and dangerous friction."[20] Besides, a war with either France or Russia would have been suicidal for Great Britain because of the growing power of Germany.[21] Moreover, the Anglo-Russian friction in Asia was likely to push the Czar into the arms of Germany.[22] According to Sir Edward Grey the direct object of a settlement between England and Russia was to secure the Indian frontier.[23] Further, there was also an indirect object that was to be on good terms with St. Petersburg. and Grey felt that the indirect object would be lost unless the Russo-Japanese relations became satisfactory, and therefore, the British wished to achieve that.[24] In 1905 *The Temps* was advising Russia to come to an agreement with England.[25] Discussing the suggested Anglo-Russian rapprochement it said that Russia and Great Britain seemed to be on the point of substituting a policy of trust and frankness for a policy of misunderstanding and suspicion.[26]

Early in 1907 the Secretary of State for India informed the Indian Government that negotiations were on foot between Russia and Great Britain for securing Anglo-Russo-Japanese understanding to the effect that none of them would attempt expansion in Central Asia or the Far East, for the term of the agreement.[27] Minto did not trust Russian pledges, and attached greater value to the unmitigated friendship of the Afghan ruler. He pointed out that the British should not make terms with Russia affecting the interests of the Amir without previous consultation with him. The Governor-General of India deplored Morley's continued refusal to permit him to send a hint to the Amir regarding the Anglo-Russian Convention.[28] However, the two Powers signed the Convention concerning

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20 Viscount Grey of Fallodon, *Twenty-Five Years, 1892 1916* (London, 1926) I, 153.

21 Trevelyan, *op cit.*, 111

22 *Ibid*, 181

23 *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec, F, June 1907, Nos. 469-533, No 501.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *The Times*, Wednesday, 5 April 1905

26. *The Times*, Thursday, 5 October 1905.

27. Mary, Countess of Minto, *India-Minto and Morley, 1905-1910* (London, 1934) 174.

28 *Ibid.*

Afghanistan without reference to its ruler, on 31 August 1907. By this agreement Russia formally acknowledged that Afghanistan was of special interest to the British Government. She also promised not to send any agents into Afghan dominions, and she accepted Great Britain as the intermediary through which the external affairs of Afghanistan should be conducted. The two Governments affirmed their adherence to the principle of equality of commercial opportunity in Afghanistan. On their part, the British Government declared not to change the political status of Afghanistan, and promised to exercise their influence in that country only in a pacific sense Great Britain engaged neither to annex nor to occupy any portion of Amir's dominions or to interfere in the internal affairs of that country, provided the Afghan ruler fulfilled his engagements towards the British Government under the Treaty of 21 March 1905 Regarding the settlement of local questions of a non-political nature the Russian and Afghan authorities were permitted to have direct relations with each other But these arrangements were to come into force only when the British Government had notified to the Russian Government the consent of the Afghan ruler to the terms of the Agreement of 1907.

After the conclusion of the Convention in August 1907, the Viceroy of India was instructed by the Secretary of State to break the news to Afghan ruler and "to persuade him to look upon it with a favourable eye."[29] Thereupon, Lord Minto informed the Amir about the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Agreement in his letter of 10 September 1907, and asked the Kabul ruler to send his formal concurrence to Articles three and four of the Convention, [30] with the least possible delay, so that the entire Convention might be brought into force [31] On 29 September, Amir Habibullah replied that he was on a tour in the interior of Afghanistan, and would send a reply to the Viceregal communication on his return to Kabul [32] The British Government perhaps believed that the relations of cordial friendship between the Indian and Afghan Governments, which had

29 Mary, Countess of Minto, *op. cit* , 176

30 Please refer to *Appendix D* for Articles III and IV of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907

31 *Foreign Dept Progs* , Sec F , Nov 1907, Nos 26-145, No. 128

32 *Foreign Dept Progs* , Sec F. Nov. 1907 Nos 26-145, No 141.

been established earlier due to the Amir's visit to India, would get them the Afghan ruler's consent without any trouble. But all their hopes were disappointed when weeks passed by and Amir Habibullah made no sign of his concurrence in the Articles of the Convention. It was after more than a year that the Amir sent a reply to the Government of India regarding the Anglo-Russian Convention in which he had requested them to explain its nature and elucidate the advantages which might accrue to him to enable him to come to a final decision [33] But ultimately all efforts of the Indian Government were frustrated and the Amir maintained complete silence on the Convention. However, the non-acceptance of the Convention by the Afghan ruler did not deter Great Britain and Russia from regarding it as a valid instrument, governing their relations in Central Asia.

The British foreign policy had now taken a new direction which favoured *Entente* and understanding in place of dangerous isolation dictating their attitude earlier. But the haste with which they concluded this agreement with Russia without consulting the Amir precipitated coolness on his part An international agreement affecting the interests of Afghanistan was arrived at between its powerful neighbours without the knowledge of the ruler of that country. It was natural for the Afghan ruler to feel slighted and to suffer from a sense of betrayal by his British ally, and there was nothing surprising if he withheld his consent regarding the Anglo-Russian Convention Seen from this point of view the Convention was no more than a dead letter. The British hope that this *Entente* with Russia would give them some permanent guarantee for security and tranquility on their Indian frontier was justified, and the serious frontier troubles that the Indian Government had to face, once again in 1908, came from the side of the Afghans not Russians. No doubt the Amir did not create any trouble during the First World War, but ultimately the Afghan resentment against the conduct of the Indian Government resulted in the Third Afghan War.

The Convention was received with mixed feelings in England and India. On a number of occasions there were sharp differences of opinion between the Governments of Great Britain and India.

33 Mary, Countess of Minto, *op. cit*, 181.

Every time the Indian Government had to bow down because the Government at St. James happened to be the supreme authority. After the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention Morley wanted that the Indian Government should have a decreased military budget, but both the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief enquired in what respect that agreement strengthened the security of the Indian frontier or enabled it to loosen its defensive watchfulness.[34]

Lord Curzon never regarded it as a good treaty. He stated that the British had obtained nothing in Afghanistan and had made most substantial concessions to Russia, and had not even taken the Amir's consent to it. Lord Lansdowne had confidence in Russia's friendship, and regarded the agreement as a fundamental change in the policy of Russia in Asia Lord Fitzmaurice, making an official reply, stated that the Russian Government had recognised for the first time in a formal treaty that Afghanistan was outside the sphere of Russian influence Mr Balfour could not regard the Convention as a great diplomatic success, but thought that it had brought substantial advantages[35] Morley regarded that the Treaty was an enormous gain and it would strengthen the Amir's security and that of his borders[36] Sir Edward Grey defending the Convention said that regarding Afghanistan the British had sacrificed nothing at all.[37]

The English language newspapers in India also gave conflicting opinions *The Englishman* said that "any sacrifice was desirable in the interests of peace" *The Statesman* expected a bitter controversy as to who had made the best bargain. *The Pioneer* said that the advantages attained profoundly modified the complexion of the foreign and military policy of India. *The Times of India* charaterised it as "a disastrous sacrifice of British interests" *The Bombay Gazette* regarded the Convention as a "travesty on the name of diplomacy.'[38] But majority of the journals in Austria-Hungary looked upon the Anglo-Russian Agreement as exploding the old and

34 John Buchan, *Lord Minto A Memoir* (London 1924) 272
35 Ward and Gooch, III, *op cit*, 362
36 Mary Countess of Minto *op cit*, 175.
37 Ward and Gooch, III, *op cit*, 364.
38 *The Times*, Monday, 30 September 1907

sedulously cultivated idea of the necessary and inevitable antagonism between England and Russia in Asia, and as introducing a fresh and particularly valuable element of steadiness into the international situation.[39] The Japanese journals also united in applauding the Anglo-Russian *Entente*, and the Russian public opinion was almost universally favourable to the Convention.[40]

The Governor-General of India, in his letter of 10 September 1907, had informed the Amir that the whole object of the Convention was to secure the integrity of Afghanistan between Russia and India, and to check any forward movement of the frontiers of either India or Russia. It was also said that the Czar's Government had recognised for the first time in a formal document that Afghanistan lay outside the orbit of Russia's influence, and had engaged that all her political relations with Afghanistan would be conducted through the intermediary of the British Government. The Amir was informed that Russia had also engaged not to send any agents into Afghanistan. But these assurances and explanations failed to satisfy the Afghan people.

Regarding the problem of Imperial defence the British diplomacy had succeeded in establishing a chain of buffer states along the so-called Indias' "Scientific Frontier" towards the north-west. The Anglo-Russian tension which had originated more than a century ago, was checked in Central Asia by the conclusion of the Agreement of 1907. For many years and under successive Governments an Anglo-Russian Agreement had formed one of the chief objects of British diplomacy. But Salisbury found himself checked in 1898 by the question of Port Arthur, and Lansdowne's efforts some years later were interrupted by the conflict between Russia and Japan. But the perseverance of Sir Edward Grey culminated in the Agreement of 1907, and removed the antagonism of two Imperialisms which for more than fifty years continually threatened the peace of the world.[41] Habberton rightly observes that "with the conclusion of the *Entente* in 1907 the Afghan question ceased to be an important factor in the relations of Great Britain and Russia."[42]

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39. *The Times*, Monday, 2 September 1907.
40 *The Times*, Monday, 30 September 1907.
41 *The Times*, Monday, 2 September 1907
42 Habberton, *op. cit.*, 82

But the Afghans felt that their independence had been sacrificed at the altar of European politics and international diplomacy. Russia had been granted a status of equality even in matters of trade, a concession which dealt with the internal affairs of the Afghan kingdom, without the knowledge and consent of the people of Afghanistan

In spite of the fact that Amir Habibullah refused to give his consent in favour of the Anglo-Russian *Entente*, no serious resentment manifested itself in the form of a serious clash between India and Afghanistan during his life time The British had taken too much for granted as far as the cordial relations of the Governments of India and Afghanistan were concerned. No doubt, the Convention had secured the Indian frontier against Russian advance, and had on the whole maintained the principle of the buffer state.[43] But it had not taken into consideration the possibilities of an unfriendly Afghan Kingdom which could also pose a threat to India's north-west frontier The problem of war-like tribes inhabiting the north-west regions was a source of constant anxiety to the Government of India The causes of Indo-Afghan friction had not completely disappeared, and there was always a possibility of a combination between the people of Afghanistan and these wild tribes in endangering the security of the Indian frontiers However, this Anglo-Russian treaty pushed the Afghan question into the background for some time to come, but this respite was only temporary, and the problem reappeared in a serious form in 1919 and resulted in another Indo-Afghan War. The Amir's non-acceptance of the Convention lowered the prestige of Great Britain, and her net gain was a "purely negative insurance" with Russia Lovat Fraser rightly observes that the Anglo-Russian agreement strained England's "already dubious relations" with the Afghan Kingdom [44]

In summing up the policy pursued by the Government of India towards Afghanistan from 1882 to 1907, we find that Russia's advance in Central Asia was the determining factor in India's relations with the Amir. Lord Ripon had suggested that the British should enter into negotiations directly with Russia, and if possible

43 Lovat Fraser, *India Under Curzon and After* (New York, 1911) 73
44 *Ibid*, 72

make a treaty with that country. The object of the Indian Government was to obtain from the Russians a regular public treaty for not interfering in any way in the internal or external affairs of the Afghan Kingdom But the British Government did not approve of this suggestion, and the Indian Government had to fall back upon the policy of having a strong and friendly Afghan power, which could act as a buffer against Russian designs towards India This policy reached its culmination when the Indian Government found in the person of Amir Abdur Rahman, a strong and friendly ruler who seemed to fulfil all their hopes The policy of maintaining a strong Afghanistan was supported by subsidies and promises of non-interference in internal matters, and armed assistance in case of unprovoked foreign aggression. This policy established cordial Indo-Afghan relations upto 1887. Both the parties stuck firmly to their obligations which led to closer ties.

However, these good relations could not continue for long, because Russian expansion in Asia prompted the Government of India to adopt a forward policy once again This move to counter-act Russian designs created some fear amongst the Afghans, and the Indo-Afghan relations became strained for quite some time. A misunderstanding was created between the two Governments and from 1888 to 1893 their relations remained tense But this tension did not last long due to Russian activities in the Pamirs, and ultimately it came to an end with the visit of the Durand Mission to Kabul, and the appointment of the Pamir Commission. The growing Anglo-Russian conflict of interests almost all over the world had its repercussions in Persia and Afghanistan also. The effects of European diplomacy prompted Russia to undertake expansion and consolidation of its position in Central Asia. This Russian policy in turn affected India's policies and relations particularly with Afghanistan and Persia The Indian Government's anxiety to have closest friendly relations with their neighbouring states towards the north-west, in order to keep them as strong buffers against Russian expansion, sometimes created misunderstandings, particulary with Afghanistan

During the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon the Indo-Afghan relations had become once again very strained. Russia's proximity to

Kabul made him undertake some defence and railway schemes, which were not appreciated by the Afghan ruler. The perpetual Indo-Afghan boundary disputes also added to the causes of friction between the two Governments Besides, there were differences of interpretation regarding the obligations of Indian and Afghan Governments arising out of the Agreements of 1880 and 1893. However, the situation did not take a serious turn in the time of Amir Abdur Rahman, and taken as a whole the relations remained satisfactory At the accession of Amir Habibullah, Lord Curzon desired to have a new compact so that he could bind the Amir in closer ties in return for the obligations which the Indian Government had undertaken for maintaining the security and independence of his Kingdom. The Afghan ruler refused to be bound by any new agreement, and promised to fulfil the obligations arising out of the old compacts There was a serious difference of opinion between the Government of India and the Amir, and Lord Curzon favoured a strong policy towards Afghanistan, in order to bring down the Afghan ruler to his knees But the British Government felt that a similar situation might arise from the stiff attitude of Curzon as had resulted from the actions of Lord Lytton. Moreover, Russsa's clamour to have direct relations of a non-political character with Afghanistan, the growing power of Germany in the Middle East, and other international considerations made the British Government force the hands of the Government of India to follow a conciliatory policy towards Afghanistan The dictatorial attitude of Lord Curzon had alienated the Kabul ruler to a considerable extent, but the activities of the Dane Mission assuaged the feelings of the Amir and restored the friendly bonds of Indo-Afghan relations

The Dane Mission had left the Amir in a friendly and favourable state of mind. Lord Minto made a good use of the opportunity for further cementing the ties of friendship between the Indian and Afghan Governments by sending a very cordial invitation to Amir Habibullah to visit India. The Amir's visit to India in the early part of 1907 was officially regarded as of a non-political nature But the Indian Government was fully prepared to discuss important political problems affecting the two Governments

provided the Afghan ruler showed any desire for it.[45] Perhaps indirectly the motive in inviting the Amir was a political one. Minto Government possibly wanted to impress the Kabul ruler with their friendly cordiality, and with the power and might of the British Indian Empire, which could go a long way in removing the causes of misunderstanding between the two neighbours. The treatment accorded to the Amir more than pleased him, and made him pledge his friendship to the Indian Government,[46] and regard "the Government of India as real friends in fact as well as in theory."[47] At the same time the Amir was shrewd enough to remark that Afghanistan was only valuable as a friend and a buffer particularly for the British Government,[48] and thereby make a reference to the important role that Afghan Kingdom played for the security of the British Indian Empire. The Anglo-Russian agreement gave a rude shock to these friendly feelings. It infused a fresh energy into Afghan suspicions, and provided a new handle to the Amir's advisers who were said to have watched his Indian visit with dislike.

The question of the Indo-Afghan frontier and the problem of controlling the tribes remained as unsettled as before. The settlement regarding the Indo-Afghan frontier between the Sassobai Pass and the Kabul River, and the Indo-Afghan boundary in the vicinity of Landi Khana had not been arrived at. The question of the boycott of Chaman Railway station remained unsolved. Actually the north-west frontier of India presented a complex problem. There were three aspects of the problem which rendered the position of the Government of India pretty difficult. Firstly, the independent tribes occupying the country between the borders of India and Afghanistan posed a serious problem to the Indian Government. Secondly, Afghanistan was also an important factor to be reckoned with. Thirdly, a threat to India from the Russian advance in Central Asia had a bearing of considerable

45. *Foreign Dept. Progs* . Sec F., Jan. 1907, Nos 37-52, No. 37.
46. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec F., Feb. 1907, Nos. 64-6, Notes
47. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., March 1907, Nos. 139-79, No. 179.
48. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., June 1907, Nos 567-631, Notes—Enclosure to No. 567.

importance regarding the north-west frontier policy of the Government of India.

After the Second Afghan War the Indian Government had withdrawn, except in a few cases, from the advanced positions which they held leaving a line of independent tribesmen between India and Afghanistan This policy of sticking back to their former position lost favour soon after, and once again, imperial as well as local considerations prompted them to follow a forward policy against the tribes By adopting this policy the Indian Government strengthened its position in the vicinity of Pamirs, in Chitral, Tochi and Wana [49] This forward movement on the part of Indian Government created suspicion and unrest amongst the frontier tribes and led to widespread frontier risings in 1897 Therefore, in 1898 the British Government decided that the existing positions should be maintained by the Indian Government, but at the same time all forward movement should be halted, and attempts should be made to extend influence on the tribes without interfering in their matters more than was required by Government considerations.[50]

After the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention the third aspect of the north-west frontier problem had been relegated to the background But the first two factors of this complicated question remained unsettled The fluctuation in implementing the north-west frontier policy of the Government of India failed to control and guage the uncertain behaviour of the frontier tribesmen, who once again created widespread disturbances in 1908. Besides, by the Convention of 1907, the British alienated the Afghan people and strengthened the causes of future hostilities between India and Afghanistan. Thus, in spite of a formal recognition of Indo-Afghan friendship in 1905, the Anglo-Russian Convention again created a gulf between the Indian and Afghan Governments, and, the position regarding their relations after August 1907 remained as undetermined as it was from the beginning of the 19 century upto 1905

49 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec. F, Dec. 1907, Nos. 80-90, No. 80, Enclosure 1
50 *Ibid*

AIDE-MEMOIRE FOR MR. DANE[1]

1. The reason of you deputation as Special Envoy to Kabul is the acceptance by the Amir of a proposal of a Mission to him recently made by the Government of India with the sanction of the Secretary of State. On both sides there has been evidence of a desire for a discussion of important matters. The Amir, in his conversation with Mr. Dobbs, spoke of there being a rift between the two Governments which he desired to see closed. Similarly the British Government have been endeavouring, ever since the present Amir succeeded his father three years ago, to arrive at a friendly understanding with him as to the future relations of the two countries and the nature of their reciprocal obligations. Lord Curzon undertook to discuss the matter with His Majesty's Government while in England, and these instructions are the result of the conference that then took place.

2. Your duty will be to discuss frankly with the Amir the whole of the points about which there is a difference of opinion or a want of a clear understanding between him and the British Government, and to arrive at a renewal of the agreement that existed between his father and ourselves. The conversation, therefore, should throughout be that of friends and allies. You should proceed upon the assumption that the objects, the interests, and the enemies of the two countries are identical, and that their policy therefore should be one of harmonious cooperation. You should

1. *Foreign Dept. Progs.*, Sec. F., Jan. 1905, Nos 34-136, Enclosure 1, No. 74.

explain quite candidly to the Amir the British point of view upon any subject in dispute, and should invite a similar confidence from him There should be no suspicion, or endeavour to snatch an advantage, or appearance of finess. When you discuss the military affairs of Afghanistan, it will be your duty of state quite plainly to the Amir your conviction of the weakness and inadequacy of his resources But your candour should invariably be that of friendship, not of controversy, or even of criticism, and it should be directed to removing misapprehension without causing offence.

3 Disclaimers - It may be well to relieve the mind of the Amir of certain suspicions which may conceivably have entered it. The Government of India have viewed with regret his inability to accept the invitation of the Viceroy to India, since they are convinced that a conversation with him would have removed any such sources of anxiety. The Amir appears to have entertained the belief that he was likely to be pressed to make some concessions in which it would be injurious to his dignity or contrary to his policy to acquiesce. There is not, nor has there at any time been, any foundation for such suspicions. In the time of his father, there were frequent discussions between the two Governments about the introduction of railways and telegraphs into Afghanistan The British Government realised that the late Amir did not share their views, and they refrained from pressing him on the subject. Railways therefore need play no part in the approaching discussion. As regards the electric telegraph, the British Government remain of the opinion that its introduction into the country would be one of the most beneficial measures for the safety of his dominions that the Amir could adopt, and they confidently anticipate that his own enlightenment will one day lead him to the same conclusion. In such a case they would at any time be prepared to construct a telegraph wherever he might desire it, and then to hand over its working to an Afghan staff who could be trained for the purpose in India. Perhaps wireless telegraphy might ultimately be employed, though at the present stage the expense would be greater, and the results more uncertain. In the meantime, if the Amir is of opinion that the matter should not play any part in the present negotiations it need not be pressed.

4 **British Officers in Afghanistan** .- In previous conferences, notably those in the time of Lord Lytton and Sher Ali, the presence of British Officers at Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, and elsewhere occupied a prominent place in the negotiations. This is a matter upon which the British Government are not disposed to press the Amir. They have no desire to ask for the permanent location of a British officer anywhere in Afghanistan Recent experience has shown that the visits of British officers to parts of the frontier e g, Colonel McMahon to Seistan, Mr. Dobbs to Herat, Mr. Donald to Kurram, have not been attended with any unfortunate consequences, but have, on the contrary, resulted in great mutual benefit Perhaps there may be found in periodical visits of this description a solution of the difficulty which undoubtedly arises from a state of ignorance about important matters, and the estrangement that naturally ensues from it. This will not prevent you from offering a few observations under a minor heading upon the position of the British Mohammedan Agent at Kabul, and of our native newswriters in other parts of the country.

5. **Internal Administration** :- It should be unnecessary but it may be wise, for you to repeat the assurance to the Amir that no interference in the internal administration of Afghanistan is either contemplated or desired. The British Government have been so faithful to their obligations in this respect in the past that a repetition of them now seems almost superfluous. But it may be cordially given.

6. These assurances should go far to relieve the mind of the Amir of any undue apprehension, and should clear the way for a discussion of the relations between the two countries. You are authorised to explain the British point of view with perfect candour.

7. **Foreign Affairs**:- In former days the Amirs of Afghanistan, notably Sher Ali, exhibited a strong desire for a definite Treaty with the British Government. Earlier still such treaties were concluded with Dost Mohammed and his predecessors. In the case of Abdur Rahman Khan a written agreement or assurance (that which was drawn up by Sir A. Lyall and presented by Sir L. Griffin in

1880) was deemed sufficient. The late Amir did not ask that this should be supplemented by any more formal document. The British Government do not regard it as a *sine qua non* that this should be a more formal instrument The important thing is, not the diplomatic form, but the sense and spirit in which the terms are interpreted and observed But it would be an advantage that there should be a Treaty, as being an instrument which would to the outside world appear to be evidence of a more binding arrangement than the assurance hitherto given.

8 **Existing Agreements Personal.**- The British Government adhere to the view which they have repeatedly stated, that the assurance of 1880 requires renewal, because it was personal to the late Amir, and was not dynastic It should be unnecessary to indulge in any prolonged argument on this subject. The renewal of the assurance *totidem verbis* should render discussion as to its terms superfluous But upon the principle that, until agreements are expressly made with the Amir and his successors, they are personal to the ruler concerned, it is not possible to admit of any compromise. Otherwise, the British Government might find themselves committed to the support of any Afghan prince who might have forced his way by murder or otherwise to the throne.

9. **Foreign Relations:**- The phraseology of the 1880 assurance leaves it in no doubt that the Amir can only conduct his foreign relations through the British Government. The Amir himself has shown no hesitation in appealing to this protection, and it has been of inestimable value to him and his father in preventing the encroachments of other powers. It is no secret, however, that the Russians desire to break down this stipulation, and to institute relations which, though nominally local and commercial in character, are intended ultimately to acquire, and could scarcely fail to acquire, a political character. The stream of communications from Russian officials in Trans-Caspia and Turkestan, from the Governor-General downwards, admits of no other interpretation, the action of Russian officers in respect of the frontier pillars on the Herat frontier is equally conclusive, while the language used by the Russian Government to Lord Lansdowne points in the same direction. Upon this point it is desirable that a very clear

understanding should be arrived at. The Amir should recognise that, if he gains the advantages of the offices of His Majesty's Government, he cannot trifle or dispense with them as he pleases The absolute control of his foreign relations is a cardinal feature of the agreement, and, if it be wittled away or ignored, His Majesty's Government would have to consider whether there was any advantage in having an agreement at all. A frank statement of the Amir's views should be invited on this point. In the memorandum which he handed to Mr. Dobbs, he spoke of the impossibility of stopping communications with the Russians regarding commerce. What is the precise meaning of this? In what sense are commercial communications required on the Russo-Afghan frontier which are not wanted on the Indian frontier? And what precautions does the Amir propose to adopt in order that this restriction shall be maintained, and that the communications which affect to relate to trade *are not really concerned with larger matters? It will greatly facilitate* the observance of the agreement, if the Amir will tell us what are the instructions which he has issued, or proposes to issue, to his officers on the subject. We cannot help being struck by the fact that, whereas communications between the Russian and Afghan officers are reported to be frequent, we have the greatest difficulty in entering into any relations, even on the most trivial matters, with the Afghan officers beyond the British border, and are frequently treated with great discourtesy by them. The conduct of the Governor of Kandahar, of the local Afghan official in the Yate incident, and of the Sarhang at Dacca, might be given as illustrations of an incivility for which there is no excuse, and which leaves a disagreeable impression. While on the subject, some explanation might be sought of the status of the Afghan commercial Agent at Samarcand.

10. British Obligations:- The discussion of the terms of the 1880 Assurance, should lead to a frank and full examination of the manner in which the obligations assumed by the British Government is to be carried out. Under the assurance, the British Government are constituted the sole judges of the manner and degree of the assistance in repelling unprovoked aggression which they undertake on certain conditions to give. This stipulation will, of course, remain unaltered, but any discussion of the form which our assistance would take in this or that contingency is to be carefully

avoided The Amir, however, has on many occasions used language which implies that he is quite satisfied, and thinks himself competent, to assume the defence of his own country, and that he does not anticipate British military assistance until after the Afghan forces have been defeated The view leads to an examination of the second important aspect of our relations with Afghanistan, viz, the military defence of that country

11 Military Defence of Afghanistan - The British Government are glad to observe that any evidence of a recognition by the Amir of the perilously weak condition of the defence of his country, and of the inadequacy of his troops to withstand a Russian attack. But they doubt if he at all realises how inferior are his resources, and how probably incapable of making any prolonged stand against a European foe Both he and his father have constantly quoted numerical totals of men and of arms which are believed to be greatly in excess of any Afghan force that could be mobilised or armed Untrained numbers will be of little value; and battalions who have never had arms of precision in their hands will be able to make little use of them on the field of battle. The example of Japan, to which the Amir is in the habit of alluding, presents no analogy whatever to the condition of Afghanistan It is only after a prolonged study and a faithful but intelligent imitation of European methods, and the employment of European officers, drill instructors, etc , on an extended scale over a period of a quarter of a century, that the Japanese have been enabled to stand up against a European foe Afghanistan could not possibly expect to reap the consequences of such a policy, while declining to adopt the policy itself It should be impressed upon the Amir in the strongest possible way that if he finds himself engaged in war with Russia in Afghanistan, he must not expect to be successful. On the contrary, he would with difficulty escape irretrievable disaaster. The Amir should be carefully sounded as to whether it would not be desirable for some reports to be made by British officers—in conjuction with his own officers—on the military features of the country between Herat and Kabul. It would be explained to him that such an examination could in no case be connected with any designs but the defence of Afghanistan against Russia. No invasion of Afghanistan from the East would affect the country in question.

If war should break out between the Amir and Russia, our Generals would be greatly hampered, if called upon to operate in a country of which partically nothing is known.

12 The Subsidy - The subsidy of 12 lakhs was originally given to the late Amir "personally, as an aid towards meeting the present difficulties in the management of his State, to be devoted to the payment of troops and other measures required for the defence of his North-West frontier" (Lord Ripon's letter of 16th June 1883). The addition of six lakhs in 1893 did not make the 12 lakhs permanent, nor indeed was the addition itself any more permanent. It was never asked for by the late Amir, it was not even mentioned by him in his concluding speech at the end of the negotiation; the instructions of the Viceroy (Lord Lansdowne) clearly laid down that it was granted to the Amir personally, and on the same conditions as the 12 lakhs, the terms of the Durand Agreement show that it was "offered in order to mark the sense of the friendly spirit in which the Amir had entered into the negotiations"

The British Government, while entertaining no doubt of the personal character of the subsidy, are prepared to treat the Amir liberally and continue it to him provided they are met in the same friendly spirit which characterised the negotiations with his father, and the stipulations which may now be entered into are fairly carried out

The representative of the Indian Government should keep in mind the following points.

Our object throughout is to bind the Amir to us by the tie of self-interest The points to which his letters attach most importance are the subsidy and the import of arms We propose, so long as his conduct is satisfactory, to pay the subsidy and to give resonable facility for the import of arms. The **quid pro quo** which we shall receive from him is :-

(a) The control of his foreign relations ;

(b) The abandonment of intrigues with frontier tribes, and

(c) The maintenance of a power friendly to Great Britain as

a formidable barrier to the advance of Russia ;

(d) Possible commercial facilities.

After most careful consideration of the military problem, the Defence Committee have come to the conclusion that, while recognising the military weakness of the Amir's army it would be dangerous to train his troops for him, even if he would permit it.

On the other hand, we cannot effectively check the import of arms, and the fact that a large amount of the subsidy has been squandered hitherto, renders it reasonably probable that, from a military stand-point, the grant of it will not seriously add to the Amir s power of turning upon us in an emergency.

For the above reasons we are not prepared to bargain as to the amount of the subsidy, or to stipulate for its allocation to a particular service So long as the Amir keeps his engagements with us, it will be paid in full.

13. It will be necessary to clear up certain grounds of misunderstanding before we can conclude a fresh agreement with the Amir :-

(a) The Mohmand boundry must be settled, not in a disputatious, but in a friendly spirit, and the entire line from the Nawa Peak to the Sassobi Pass must be defined. When the Government of India make their railway (if they do) in the direction of Shilman and Kam Dacca, the Amir must adopt, not a hostile, but a friendly attitude. It is necessary for the defence of India and to enable us to give assistance to the Amir we should improve our communications within our own border We shall probably require to build a railway in the neighbourhood of the Khyber and a railway up the Kurram Valley. These precautions will in fact be forced upon us by the railway policy of the Russians in pushing down towards the Oxus They will undoubtedly tend to the strengthening of the Amir's position, but their origin will be the defence of India, which is our first aim.

(b) The status, position, and treatment of the British Agent at Kabul must be discussed, and an understanding arrived at. At present the Amir sometimes gives great umbrage to the Government of India by what appear to be capti-

ous objections to the selection of this or that individual, and by the treatment which is accorded at Kabul to the Agent himself. The Afghan Envoy at Simla and Calcutta enjoys extraordinary liberty of movement and action, and is treated with no small consideration by the Government of India. There is no ground whatever for different treatment of the British Agent at Kabul At present it is difficult to get Mohammedans of the highest rank to accept the Kabul post, because of the treatment which they know that they will receive The Agent is more or less a prisoner, and is carefully watched by spies. He should, on the contrary, be treated with exceptional distinction. He should be the natural mouthpiece to the Amir of the views of the Government of India, and should be honoured with his confidence in return. He should not be merely an official with a seat in Darbar and an escort in the streets. As long as the present position continues, it will be impossible to persuade the best type of man to accept the post. Similarly the Amir should be spoken to about the treatment of the news-writer at Kandahar. The Amir has his agents or correspondents in different parts of India, and no retriction is placed upon the legitimate discharge of these duties. The treatment of the news-writer at Kandahar, on the other hand, is discourteous and often insulting.

(c) It is incompatible with the harmonious relations that ought to exist between allied Powers, and still more between Powers in the peculiar position of Great Britain and Afghanistan, that incidents should occur like the conduct of the Afghan officers at Shinpokh, Samatsai, Darband, and in the affair of Colonel Yate. Such an attitude, which is both discourteous and unfriendly, causes natural bitterness on the part of the Government of India, and could easily be suppressed by the Amir if he made it clearly understood that an aggressive and provocative attitude on the part of his frontier officers was discountenanced and would be punished by him

(d) Still greater offence is caused by the constant intrigues

of the Amir with the Afridis and other border tribes By the terms of the Durand Agreement, which the Amir is never tired of quoting, his father bound himself "at no time to exercise interference in the territories lying beyond the Durand line on the side of India." And yet it is notorious that the Afridis are constantly being invited to Kabul, that they are given large sums of money by the Amir, that discontented spirits, such as Khwas Khan, are encouraged and favoured at Kabul All of this is in direct contravention of the Durand Agreement ; and it is essential that there should be a cessation of these proceedings, and that the Amir should not merely renew and observe his father's pledges, but instruct his officers to conform to them.

(e) The question of the facilities given by the Government of India for the import of arms into Afghanistan is one of great difficulty The terms of the Durand Agreement in this respect were vague. "The Government of India will raise no objection to the purchase and import by His Highness of munitions of war, and they will themselves grant him some help in this respect" If the relations between the Amir and oureselves are what they ought to be, and if the munitions imported are within reason, there is not likely to be any capricious interference or opposition It is impossible to prevent the Amir obtaining arms, and it is better that he should draw them from or through us than from other sources The arms he turns out on his own account will probably cost him more and be inferior to weapons of the same description manufactured in Europe It would seem to be much better that there should be no stipulation on the subject, rather than one which can only give rise to friction and misunderstanding The feelings of the Government of India about the import and manufacture of arms are further affected by the fact that there has in recent years been a brisk trade across the Afghan border into India of Kabul-manufactured arms, and that when we have trouble with the border tirbes we are liable

to find them armed with weapons which our own subsidies to the Amir have assisted to provide. The Amir should be spoken to very seriously on this point. Subject to satisfactory assurances being received, the best solution seems to be to say that we should be glad to consent from time to time to his importing through British India such munitions of war as on a liberal estimate of the requirements of the position might be needed for the defence of Afghanistan, provided that on each occasion he informs the Government of India as to the orders which he proposes to give.

(f) It would be well to open with the Amir the question of a more liberal "commercial policy" as to exports and imports from India. Afghans are admitted to trade freely in all parts of India, and may be found as far east as Burma and Assam. No duties whatever are placed by the Government of India upon Afghan trade except the tolls in the Khyber. Afghanistan is the sole civilised country in the world to which British territories are contiguous, and with which we do not possess a commercial agreement. It has been found desirable even by uncivilised countries Quite lately we have even concluded commercial arrangements with Tibet. The first Treaty of 1839, between the East India Company and Shah Kamran contained an article providing for freedom of commerce between India and Afghanistan. The treaty with Dost Mohmmed of 1855 contained a similar provision It re-appeared in the Treaty of Gundamuk in 1879. Lord Lytton contemplated that the general provision for the protection and encouragement of commerce, which were contained in Articles 6 and 7 of that Treaty should be followed within 12 months by a special commercial convention, the interval being devoted to the selection and improvement of roads, an examination of the nature of trade between the two countries, and the reciprocal adjustment of duties. Advantage might also be taken of the opportunity to inform the Amir that we cannot possibly acquiesce in the levying by Afghan agents of taxes in

British territory (this is from time to time attempted at Peshawar) and that all such actions must be desisted from The conclusion of a commercial Convention would, almost inevitably lead to a similar demand by Russia, and the Government of India would probably consider it preferable to obtain assurances as to the free passage of trading caravans through the passes, which would in the long run bring about better relations between India and Afghanistan, rather than a Convention which would if repeated on the Russian side, invitably lead to political intrigues under the guise of commercial intercourse. It should be remembered also that if any considerable trade is set up between Afghanistan and the East, it is not improbable that a free exchange of products with other neighbours will become a necessity in order to sustain it.

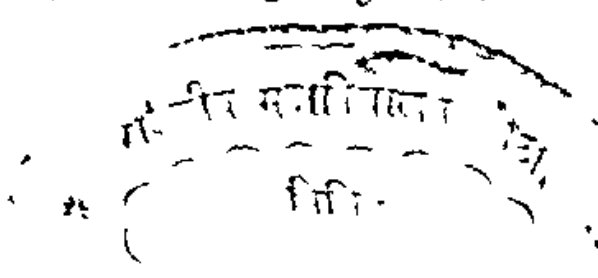
14 As regards the form of new Agreement the Foreign Department in India should advise The view of the British Government being that all Agreements with the late Amir were personal, and have expired, it would seem desirable to recapitulate or renew any such portions of them as are pertinent to the present situation. The political assurance of 1880 might be repeated in the same or similar words, but, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, this should be done, not in a letter such as was given to Abdur Rahman, but in a formal treaty between the Governor-General on behalf of the British Government and the Amir. A draft of the treaty to be proposed to the Amir is attached. Such a change in the form of the Agreement would create no real increase in our responsibilities or in the Amir's obligation , but it would present the relations between Great Britain and Afghanistan to the outside world in a form which could not possibly be ignored or misunderstood, it would leave no pretext for doubt in the mind of the Russian Government as to the serious dangers involved in any attempt at interference by their frontier officers in Afghan affairs, and as to our determination to make any unprovoked aggression a *casus belli*, and it would stereotype our policy so that it should not readily be influenced by any circumstances temporarily affecting the Government of this country

A treaty of this nature, although personal to the present ruler of Afghanistan, would have the further advantage of strengthening our position as to the protection of Afghans in Turkey, Persia, and other countries, in which at present the undefined status of Afghanistan creates difficulties in this respect But as the assent or acquiescence of the Powers concerned, is necessary before such protection can be exercised, it will be best to avoid mentioning the subject unless the Amir raises it, and, in that event, not to promise more than that each case as it arises shall be at once taken up and dealt with according to circumstances A separate and subordinate form of Agreement might be devised for the remaining points, including so much of the 1893 Agreement as it is desired to renew. The subsidy should probably be consolidated and paid in a fixed sum.

15. If the Amir is willing to meet us fairly in the negotiations, and shows a conciliatory spirit, we shall be prepared to pay him a sum in respect of the arrears of subsidy which would have become due between October 1901 and October 1904, but such a sum would be spread over a term of years, and it would be well to refer to the Government of India as to the details of the method of payment.

In the event of the Amir raising the question of being allowed to have a representative in this country it would suffice to refer him to the terms of Lord Salisbury's letter of 1895 to the late Amir, declining to entertain the proposal. The complaint we have to make of the treatment of our Native Agent at Kabul increases the force of Lord Salisbury's argument.

16. Should the Amir appear to be dissatisfied with the proposals which you are authorised to lay before him at the Conference, it might be suggested to him that the better way to settle all difficulties would be to come and meet the Viceroy and hear from his own lips an authoritative exposition of the views of Government. This might have one of two effects. Either it might bring the Amir down to India to argue his own case, or, more probably, it would decided him to acquiesce in the terms offered, for fear of getting worse.



Appendix B

THE BRITISH DRAFT TREATY[1]

Whereas it is advisable to continue and confirm the understanding and agreement which has existed between the British Government and His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan with regard to the relations between the Amir and Foreign Powers, and with regard to the assistance to be given by the British Government to the Amir in case of unprovoked aggression by any Foreign Power, His Excellency the Governor-General of India on behalf of the British Government and His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan hereby agree as follows -

His Highness the Amir will hold no political relations with any Foreign Power except the British Government. He will follow unreservedly the advice of the British Government in regard to his relations with all Foreign Powers.

If any Foreign Power should attempt to interfere in Afghanistan, and if such interference should lead to unprovoked aggression on the dominions of His Highness, the British Government will be prepared to support His Highness against such aggression to such extent as may appear to them necessary, and in such manner as they may deem advisable

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1 *Foreign Dept. Progs*, Sec F, Jan 1905, Nos 34-136, Enclosure 2, No 74

Appendix C[1]

TRANSLATION OF THE TREATY SIGNED ON 21 MARCH 1905.

Praise Be To God !

His Majesty Siraj-ul-millat-wa-ud-din Amir Habibullah Khan, Independent King of the State of Afghanistan and its dependencies, on the one part, and the Honorable Mr. Louis William Dane, C.S.I., Foreign Secretary of the Mighty Government of India and Representative of the exalted British Government on the other part.

His said Majesty does hereby agree to this that, in matters of principle and of subsidiary importance of the Treaty regarding internal and external affairs and of the engagements which His Highness, my late father, that is, Zia-ul-millat-wa-ud-din, who has found mercy, may God enlighten his tomb ! concluded and acted upon with the exalted British Government, I also have acted, am acting, and will act upon the same agreement and compact, and I will not contravene them in any dealing or in any promise

The said Honorable Mr. Louis William Dane does hereby agree to this that as to the very agreement and engagement that the exalted British Government concluded and acted upon with the noble father of His Majesty Siraj-ul-millat-wa-ud-din, that is, His Highness Zia-ul-millat-wa-ud-din, who has found mercy, regarding internal and external affairs and matters of principle or of subsidiary importance, I confirm them and write that they (the British Government) will not act contrary to those agreements and engagements in any way or any time.

Made on Tuesday, the 14th day of Muharram-ul-Haram of the

year 1323 Hijri, corresponding to the 21st day of March of the year 1905 A D

(Persian seal of Amir Habibullah Khan)
This (2) is correct. I have sealed and signed.
Amir Habibullah.

Louis W Dane,
Foreign Secretary,
Representing the Government of India.

1 *Foreign Dept Progs*, Sec F, *May 1905*, Nos. 448-557, No. 518.
2 In the handwriting of the Amir

Appendix D

THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN CONVENTION, 1907

The High Contracting Parties, in order to ensure perfect security on their respective frontiers in Central Asia and to maintain in these regions a solid and lasting peace, have concluded the following Convention.

Article I. His Britannic Majesty's Government declare that they have no intention of changing the political status of Afghanistan.

His Britannic Majesty's Government further engage to exercise their influence in Afghanistan only in a pacific sense, and they will not themselves take, nor encourage Afghanistan to take, any measures threatening Russia.

The Russian Government, on their part, declare that they recognise Afghanistan as outside the sphere of Russian influence, and they engage that all their political relations with Afghanistan shall be conducted through the intermediary of His Britannic Majesty's Government, they further engage not to send any Agents into Afghanistan.

Article II. The Government of His Britannic Majesty having declared in the Treaty signed at Kabulon the 21st March 1905, that they recognise the Agreement and the engagements concluded with the Late Amir Abdur Rahman, and that they have no intention of interfering in the internal government of Afghan territory, Great Britain engages neither to annex nor to occupy in contravention of that Treaty any portion of Afghanistan or to interfere in the internal administration of the country, provided that the Amir fulfils the engagements already contracted by him towards His Britannic Majesty's Government under the above mentioned Treaty.

Article III. The Russian and Afghan authorities designated for the purpose on the frontier or in the frontier provinces, may establish direct relations with each other for the settlement of local questions of a non-political character.

Article IV. His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Russian Government affirm their adherence to the principle of equality of commercial opportunity in Afghanistan, and they agree that any facilities which may have been, or shall be hereafter obtained for British and British-Indian trade and traders, shall be equally enjoyed by Russian trade and traders. Should the progress of trade establish the necessity for Commercial Agents, the two Governments will agree as to what measures shall be taken, due regard, of course, being had to the Amir's sovereign rights.

Article V The present arrangements will only come into force when His Britannic Majesty's Government shall have notified to the Russian Government the consent of the Amir to the terms stipulated above

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